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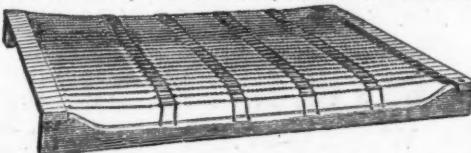
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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JANUARY 1885.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JANUARY 1885.

White Heather;

A NOVEL.

BY WILLIAM BLACK.

CHAPTER I.

A JOURNEY NORTHWARD.

ON a certain cold evening in January, and just as the Scotch night-mail was about to start for the north, a stranger drove up to Euston and alighted, and was glad enough to escape from the chill draughts of the echoing station into the glow and warmth and comfort of a sleeping-car. He was a man of means apparently; for one half of this carriage, containing four berths, and forming a room apart, as it were, had been reserved for himself alone; while his travelling impedimenta—fur-lined coats and hoods and rugs and what not—were of an elaborate and sumptuous description. On the other hand, there was nothing of ostentation about either his dress, or appearance, or demeanour. He was a tall, thin, quiet-looking man, with an aquiline nose, sallow complexion, and keen but not unkindly grey eyes. His short-cropped hair was grizzled, and there were deep lines in the worn and ascetic face; but this may have been the result of an exhausting climate rather than of any mental care, for there was certainly no touch of melancholy in his expression. His costume was somewhat prim and precise; there was a kind of schoolmasterish look about the stiff white collar and small black tie; his gloves were new and neat. For the rest, he seemed used to travelling; he began to make himself at home at once, and scarcely looked up

from this setting of things to rights when the conductor made his appearance.

'Mr. Hodson, sir?' the latter said with an inquiring glance.

'That's about what they call me,' he answered, slowly, as he opened a capacious dressing-bag covered with crocodile-hide.

'Do you expect any friends to join you further along, sir?'

'Not that I know of,' was the answer—and a pair of dark-blue velvet slippers, with initials worked in gold, were fished out and thrown upon the seat beside him.

But when the conductor had got one of the lower sleeping-berths made ready and the traveller had completed his leisurely arrangements for passing the night in comfort, a somewhat one-sided conversation ensued. This gaunt, slow-speaking, reserved man proved to be quite talkative—in a curious, measured, dry, and staccato fashion; and if his conversation consisted chiefly of questions, these showed that he had a very honest and simple concern in the welfare of this other human being whom chance had thrown in his way, and that he could express his friendly interest without any touch of patronage or condescension. He asked first about the railway-line; how the company's servants were paid; what were their hours on duty; whether they had formed any associations for relief in case of sickness; what this particular man got for his work; whether he could look forward to any bettering of his lot, and so forth. And then, fixing his eyes more scrutinisingly on his companion, he began to ask about his family affairs—where he lived; what children he had; how often he saw them; and the like; and these questions were so obviously prompted by no idle curiosity, but by an honest sympathy, and by the apparent desire of one human being to get to understand fully and clearly the position, and surroundings, and prospects of this other fellow-creature, that it was impossible for any one to take offence.

'And how old is your little girl?'

'Eight, sir: she will be nine in May next.'

'What do you call her?'

'Caroline, sir.'

'Why, you don't say!' he exclaimed, with his eyes—which were usually calm and observant—lighting up with some surprise. 'That is the name of my girl too—though I can't call her little any more. Well now,' he added, as he took out his purse and selected a sovereign from the mass of coins, 'I think this is about what you ought to do. When you get back to Camden Town,

you start an account in the Post Office Savings Bank, in your little girl's name, and you put in this sovereign as a first deposit. Then, whenever you have an odd sixpence or shilling to give her—a birthday present, or that—you keep adding on and on ; and there will be a nice little sum for her in after years. And if ever she asks, you can tell her it was the father of an American Caroline who made her this little present ; and if she grows up to be as good a girl as the American Carry, she'll do very well, I think.'

The conductor scarcely knew how to express his thanks, but the American cut him short, saying coolly—

'I don't give the sovereign to you at all. It is in trust for your daughter. And you don't look to me the kind of man who would go and drink it.'

He took out an evening newspaper, and, at the hint, the conductor went away to get ready the berths in the other end of the car. When he came back again to see if the gentleman wanted anything further for the night, they had thundered along the line until they were nearing Rugby.

'Why, yes,' Mr. Hodson said, in answer to the question, 'you might get me a bottle of soda-water when we get to the station.'

'I have soda-water in the car, sir.'

'Bring me a bottle, then, please.'

'And shall I get anything else for you, sir, at Rugby ?'

'No, I thank you.'

When the man returned with the soda-water, the traveller had taken from his dressing-bag a bottle labelled 'Bromide of Potassium,' and he was just about to mix his customary sleeping-draught when it occurred to him that perhaps this conductor could tell him something of the new and far country into which he was about to adventure for the first time. And in making these inquiries he showed that he was just as frank-spoken about his own plans and circumstances as he expected other people to be about theirs. When the conductor confessed that he knew next to nothing about the north of Scotland, never having been further than Perth, and even then his knowledge of the country being confined to the railway-line and the stations, Mr. Hodson went on to say—in that methodical way of his, with little rising inflexions here and there—

'Well, it's bound to be different from London, anyway. It can't be like London ; and that's the main thing for me. Why, that London fog, never moving, same in the morning, same at night, it's just too dismal for anything ; the inside of a jail is a

fool to it. 'Pears to me that a London afternoon is just about as melancholy as they make it; if there's anything more melancholy than that anywhere, I don't know it. Well, now, it can't be like that at Cape Wrath.'

'I should think not, sir.'

'I dare say if I lived in the town, and had my club, and knew people, it might be different; and my daughter seems to get through the time well enough; but young folks are easily amused. Say, now, about this salmon fishing in the north: you don't know when it begins?'

'No, sir.'

'You haven't seen anybody going yet with a bundle of rods?'

'No, sir, not this year yet.'

'Hope they haven't been playing it on me—I was told I could begin on the eleventh. But it don't signify much so long's I get out of that infernal cut-throat atmosphere of London.'

At this point the train began to slow into Rugby station, and the conductor left to attend to his duties; and by the time they were moving out again and on their way to the far north, Mr. Hodson had mixed and drunk his nightly potion, and, partially undressed, was wrapped up in the thick and warm coverings of the sleeping-berth, where, whether owing to the bromide of potassium, or the jog-trot rattle of the wheels, he was soon plunged in a profound slumber.

Well, if part of his design in thus venturing upon a journey to the north in mid-winter was to get away from the monotonous mists of London, the next morning showed him that so far he had been abundantly successful. The day breaking caused him to open his eyes; and instinctively he turned to the window. There before him was a strange, and unusual, and welcome sight. No more dismal greys, and the gathering down of a hopeless dusk; but the clear, glad light of the morning—a band of flashing gold all along the eastern horizon, behind the jet-black stems and branches of the leafless trees; and over that the heavens were all of a pale and luminous lilac, with clouds hanging here and there—clouds that were dark and almost thunderous in their purple look, but that really meant nothing but beauty, as they lay there soft and motionless in the glowing and mystical dawn. Quickly he got up. The windows were thrown open. And this air that rushed in—so fresh, so sweet, so full of all kinds of mellow and fragrant messages from the hills, and the pine-woods, and the wide-lying straths—did it not bring a strange kind of joy and surprise with it?

'A beautiful morning, sir ; we are getting near to Perth now,' the conductor said, when he made his appearance.

'Are we on time ?'

'Yes, in very good time.'

'And no hurry about breakfast ?'

'No, sir ; you don't start again till nine o'clock.'

Even this big hollow station, with its wide stone platforms and resounding arch : was it the white light that filled it, or the fresh air that blew through it, that made it quite a cheerful place ? He was charmed with the accent of the timid handmaiden who brought him his breakfast in the refreshment room, and who waited on him in such a friendly, half-anxious, shy fashion ; and he wondered whether he would dare to offer so pretty and well-mannered a young lady anything over the customary charge in token of his gratitude to her for her gentle ways. Perth itself : well, there had been rain in the night, and the streets near the station were full of mud ; but then the cart ruts in the mud were gleaming lines of gold ; and the beautiful sky hung over the slowly rising smoke of the houses ; and the air was everywhere so sweet and welcome. He had got into a new world altogether ; the weight of the London atmosphere was lifted from him ; he whistled '*Auld Lang Syne*'—which was the only Scotch air he knew—and the lugubrious tune sounded quite pleasant on so joyous a morning.

Moreover, these were but first and commonplace experiences. For by-and-by, when he had again taken his seat to prosecute his journey—and he found himself the sole occupant of the carriage—the sunrise had widened into the full splendour of a sunlit day ; and as the train sped away to the north, he, sitting at the window there, and having nothing to do but examine the new country he was entering, was wholly amazed at the intensity and brilliancy of the colouring around, and at the extraordinary vividness of the light. The wide stretches of the Tay shone like burnished silver ; there were yellow straths and fields ; and beech hedges of a rich russet-red ; and fir-woods of a deep fresh green ; and still further away low-lying hills of a soft and ruddy purple, touched sharp here and there with patches of snow ; and over all these a blue sky as of summer. The moist, warm air that blew in at the window seemed laden with pine odours ; the country-women at the small stations had a fresh pink colour in their cheeks ; everywhere a new and glad and wholesome life seemed to be abroad, and cheerfulness, and rich hues, and sunlight.

'This is good enough,' he said to himself. 'This is something like what I shipped for.'

And so they sped on : through the soft, wide-stretching woods of Murthly, and Birnam, and Dunkeld ; through the shadow and sudden gleams of Killiecrankie Pass ; on by Blair Athol and the banks of the Garry ; until, with slow and labouring breath, the train began to force its way up the heights of the Grampians, in the lone neighbourhood of the Drumochter Forest. The air was keener here ; the patches of snow were nearer at hand ; indeed, in some places the line had evidently been cleared, and large snow banks heaped up on each side. But by-and-by the motion of the train seemed to become easier ; and soon it was apparent that the descent had begun ; presently they were rattling away down into the wide and shining valley of Strathspey ; and far over there on the west and north, and keeping guard over the plain, as it were, rose the giant masses of the Cairngorm hills, the snow sparkling here and there on their shoulders and peaks.

It was not until half-past four in the afternoon that the long railway journey came to an end ; and during that time he had come upon many a scene of historical interest and pictorial beauty. He had been within a short distance of the mournful 'haughs of Cromdale' ; he had crossed Culloden Moor. Nearing Forres, he had come within sight of the Northern Sea ; and thereafter had skirted the blue ruffled waters of the Moray, and Cromarty, and Dornoch Firths. But even when he had got to Lairg, a little hamlet at the foot of Loch Shin, his travelling for the day was not nearly over ; there still remained a drive of four-and-twenty miles ; and although it was now dusk and the weather threatened a change, he preferred to push on that night. Travelling did not seem to tire him much ; no doubt he was familiar with immeasurably greater distances in his own country. Moreover, he had learned that there was nothing particular to look at in the stretch of wild moorland that lay between him and his destination ; and then again, if it was dark now, there would be moonlight later on. So he ate his dinner leisurely and in content, until a wagonette with two stout horses was brought round ; then he got in ; and presently they were away from the little hamlet and out in a strange land of darkness and silence, scarcely anything visible around them, the only sound the jog-trot clatter of the horses' feet.

It was a desperately lonely drive. The road appeared to go over interminable miles of flat or scarcely undulating moorland ; and even when the moonlight began to make the darkness faintly visible, that only increased the sense of solitude, for there was not

even a single tree to break the monotony of the sombre horizon line. It had begun to rain also: not actual rain, but a kind of thin drizzle, that seemed to mix itself up with the ineffectual moonlight, and throw a wan haze over these far-reaching and desolate wastes. Tramp, tramp went the horses' feet through this ghostly world; the wet mist grew thicker and thicker and clung around the traveller's hair; it was a chilling mist, moreover, and seemed to search for weak places about the throat. The only sharply defined objects that the eye could rest on were the heads and up-thrown ears of the horses, that shone in the light sent forward by the lamps: all else was a formless wilderness of gloom, shadows following shadows, and ever the desolate landscape stretching on and on, and losing itself in the night.

The American stood up in the wagonnette, perhaps to shake off for a second the clammy sensation of the wet.

'Say, young man,' he observed—but in an absent kind of way, for he was regarding, as far as that was possible, the dusky undulations of the mournful landscape—'don't you think now, that for a good wholesome dose of God-forsakenness, this'll about take the cake?'

'Ah beg your paardon, sir,' said the driver, who was apparently a Lowlander.

The stranger, however, did not seem inclined to continue the conversation; he sank into his seat again; gathered his rugs round him; and contented himself as heretofore by idly watching the lamplight touching here and there on the harness and lighting up the horses' heads and ears.

Mile after mile, hour after hour, went by in this monotonous fashion; and to the stranger it seemed as if he were piercing further and further into some unknown land unpeopled by any human creatures. Not a ray of light from any hut or farmhouse was visible anywhere. But as the time went on, there was at least some little improvement in the weather. Either the moonlight was growing stronger, or the thin drizzle clearing off; at all events he could now make out ahead of him—and beyond the flat moorland—the dusky masses of some mountains, with one great peak overtopping them all. He asked the name.

'That is Ben Clebrig, sir.'

And then through the mist and the moonlight a dull sheet of silver began to disclose itself dimly.

'Is that a lake down there?'

'Loch Naver, sir.'

'Then we are not far from Inver-Mudal?'

'No far noo ; just a mile or two, sir,' was the consoling answer.

And indeed when he got to the end of his journey, and reached the little hostelry set far amid these moorland and mountain wilds, his welcome there made ample amends. He was ushered into a plain, substantially furnished, and spacious sitting-room, brightly lit up by the lamp that stood on the white cloth of the table, and also by the blazing glare from the peats in the mighty fireplace ; and when his eyes had got accustomed to this bewilderment of warmth and light, he found, awaiting his orders, and standing shyly at the door, a pretty, tall, fair-haired girl, who, with the softest accent in the world, asked him what she should bring him for supper. And when he said he did not care to have anything, she seemed quite surprised and even concerned. It was a long, long drive, she said, in her shy and pretty way ; and would not the gentleman have some hare-soup—that they had kept hot for him ? and so forth. But her coaxing was of no avail.

'By the way, what is your name, my girl ?' he said.

'Nelly, sir.'

'Well, then, Nelly, do you happen to know whether Lord Ailine's keeper is anywhere in the neighbourhood ?'

'He is in the unn, sir, waiting for you.'

'Oh, indeed. Well, tell him I should like to see him. And say, what is his name ?'

'Ronald, sir.'

'Ronald ?'

'That is his first name,' she explained.

'His "first name" ? I thought that was one of our Americanisms.'

She did not seem to understand this.

'Ronald Strang is his name, sir ; but we jist call him Ronald.'

'Very well, Nelly ; you go and tell him I want to see him.'

'Ferry well, sir,' she said ; and away she went.

But little indeed did this indefatigable student of nature and human nature—who had been but half interested by his observations and experiences through that long day's travel—know what was yet in store for him. The door opened ; a slim-built and yet muscular young man of eight-and-twenty or so appeared there, clad in a smart deer-stalking costume of brownish green ; he held his cap in his hand ; and round his shoulder was the strap from which hung behind the brown leather case of his telescope. This Mr. Hodson saw at a glance ; and also something more. He prided himself on his judgment of character. And when his quick look had taken in the keen, sun-tanned face of this young

fellow, the square, intellectual forehead, the firm eyebrows, the finely cut and intelligent mouth, and a certain proud set of the head, he said to himself, ‘This is *a man*: there’s something here worth knowing.’

‘Good evening, sir,’ the keeper said, to break the momentary silence.

‘Good evening,’ said Mr. Hodson (who had been rather startled out of his manners). ‘Come and sit down by the fire; and let’s have a talk now about the shooting and the salmon-fishing. I have brought the letters from the Duke’s agent with me.’

‘Yes, sir,’ said Strang; and he moved a bit further into the room; but remained standing, cap in hand.

‘Pull in a chair,’ said Mr. Hodson, who was searching for the letters.

‘Thank ye, sir; thank ye,’ said the keeper; but he remained standing nevertheless.

Mr. Hodson returned to the table.

‘Sit down, man, sit down,’ said he, and he himself pulled in a chair. ‘I don’t know what your customs are over here, but anyhow I’m an American citizen; I’m not a lord.’

Somewhat reluctantly the keeper obeyed this injunction, and for a minute or two seemed to be rather uncomfortable; but when he began to answer the questions concisely put to him with regard to the business before them, his shyness wholly wore away, for he was the master of this subject, not the stranger who was seeking for information. Into the details of these matters it is needless to enter here; and, indeed, so struck was the American with the talk and bearing of this new acquaintance that the conversation went far afield. And the further afield it went, the more and more was he impressed with the extraordinary information and intelligence of the man, the independence of his views, the shrewdness and sometimes sarcasm of his judgments. Always he was very respectful; but in his eyes—which seemed singularly dark and lustrous here indoors, but which, out of doors and when he was after the wary stag, or the still more wary hinds, on the far slopes of Clebrig, contracted and became of a keen brownish grey—was a kind of veiled fire of humour which, as the stranger guessed, might in other circumstances blaze forth wildly enough. Mr. Hodson, of Chicago, was entirely puzzled. A gamekeeper? He had thought (from his reading of English books) that a gamekeeper was a velveteen-coated person whose ideas ranged from the alehouse to the pheasant-coverts, and thence and quickly back again. But this man seemed to have a wide and competent

knowledge of public affairs ; and, when it came to a matter of argument (they had a keen little squabble about the protection tariffs of America) he could reason hard, and was not over-compliant.

'God bless me,' Mr. Hodson was driven to exclaim at last, 'what is a man of your ability doing in a place like this? Why don't you go away to one of the big cities—or over to America—where a young fellow with his wits about him can push himself forward?'

'I would rather be "where the dun deer lie,"' said he, with a kind of bashful laugh.

'You read Kingsley?' the other said, still more astonished.

'My brother lends me his books from time to time,' Ronald said, modestly. 'He's a Free Church minister in Glasgow.'

'A Free Church minister? He went through college, then?'

'Yes, sir; he took his degree at Aberdeen.'

'But—but—' said the new-comer, who had come upon a state of affairs he could not understand at all—'who was your father, then? He sent your brother to college, I presume?'

'Oh no, sir. My father is a small farmer down the Lammermuir way; and he just gave my brother Andrew his wages like the rest, and Andrew saved up for the classes.'

'You are not a Highlander, then?'

'But half-and-half, like my name, sir,' he said (and all the shyness was gone now: he spoke to this stranger frankly and simply as he would have spoken to a shepherd on the hillside). 'My mother was Highland. She was a Macdonald; and so she would have me called Ronald; it's a common name wi' them.'

Mr. Hodson stared at him for a second or two in silence.

'Well,' said he, slowly, 'I don't know. Different men have different ways of looking at things. I think if I were of your age, and had your intelligence, I would try for something better than being a gamekeeper.'

'I am very well content, sir,' said the other, placidly; 'and I couldn't be more than that anywhere else. It's a healthy life; and a healthy life is the best of anything—at least that is my way of thinking. I wadna like to try the toun; I doubt it woudna 'gree wi' me.' And then he rose to his feet. 'I beg your pardon, sir; I've been keeping ye late.'

Well, Mr. Hodson was nothing loth to let him go; for although he had arrived at the conviction that here was a valuable human life, of exceptional quality and distinction, being absolutely thrown away and wasted, still he had not formed the arguments by which he might try to save it for the general good, and for the particular

good of the young man himself. He wanted time to think over this matter—and in cool blood; for there is no doubt that he had been surprised and fascinated by the intellectual boldness and incisiveness of the younger man's opinions and by the chance sarcasms that had escaped him.

'I could get him a good opening in Chicago soon enough,' he was thinking to himself, when the keeper had left, 'but upon my soul I don't know the man that is fit to become that man's master. Why, I'd start a newspaper for him myself, and make him editor—and if he can't write, he has got mother-wit enough to guide them that can—but he and I would be quarrelling in a week. That fellow is not to be driven by anybody.'

He now rang the bell for a candle; and the slim and yellow-haired Nelly showed him upstairs to his room, which he found to be comfortably warm, for there was a blazing peat fire in the grate, scenting all the air with its delicious odour. He bade her good-night, and turned to open his dressing-bag; but at the same moment he heard voices without, and, being of an inquiring turn of mind, he went to the window. The first thing he saw was that outside a beautiful clear moon was now shining; the leafless elm-trees and the heavy-foliaged pines throwing sharp black shadows across the white road. And this laughing and jesting at the door of the inn?—surely he heard Ronald's voice there—the gayest of any—among the jibes that seemed to form their farewells for the night? Then there was the shutting of a door; and in the silence that ensued he saw the solitary, straight-limbed, clean-made figure of a man stride up the white road, a little dog trotting behind him.

'Come along, Harry, my lad,' the man said to his small companion—and that, sure enough, was the keeper's voice.

And then, in the stillness of the moonlight night, this watcher and listener was startled to hear a clear and powerful tenor voice suddenly begin to sing—in a careless fashion, it is true, as if it were but to cheer the homeward going—

*'Come all ye jolly shepherds,
 That whistle through the glen,
 I'll tell ye of a secret
 That courtiers dinna ken.
 What is the greatest bliss
 That the tongue o' man can name?—
 'Tis to woo a bonnie lassie
 When the kye come hame.'*

'Great heavens!' said Mr. Hodson to himself, 'such a voice—

and all Europe waiting for a new tenor! But at seven or eight-and-twenty, I suppose he is beyond training.'

The refrain became more and more distant:

‘When the kye come hame,
When the kye come hame,
‘Twixt the gloamin’ and the mirk,
When the kye come hame.’

Both the keeper and the little trotting terrier had disappeared now, having turned a corner of the road where there was a clump of trees. The traveller who had wandered into these remote wilds sat down for a minute or two to sum up his investigations of the evening, and they were these :

‘Accounts of the deer seem shaky; but there may have been bad shooting this last year, as he says. The salmon-fishing sounds more likely; and then Carry could come with us in the boat—which would make it less dull for her. Anyhow, I have discovered the most remarkable man I have met with as yet in the old country; and to think of his being thrown away like that!’

CHAPTER II.

MEENIE.

WE may now follow Ronald Strang as he walks along to his cottage, which, with its kennels and its shed for hanging up the slain deer, stands on a little plateau by the roadside, a short distance from the inn. The moonlight night is white and beautiful, but far from silent; for the golden plover are whistling and calling down by the lochside, and the snipe are sending their curious harsh note across the moorland wastes. Moreover, he himself seems to be in a gay mood (perhaps glad to be over the embarrassment of a first meeting with the stranger), and he is conversing amicably with his little terrier. The subject is rats. Whether the wise little Harry knows all that is said need not be determined; but he looks up from time to time and wags his stump of a tail as he trots placidly along. And so they get up to the cottage and enter, for the outer door is on the latch, thieves being unheard of in this remote neighbourhood; though here Harry hesitates, for he is uncertain whether he is to be invited into the parlour or not. But the next moment all consideration of this four-footed friend is driven out of his master’s head. Ronald had expected to find the parlour empty, and his little

sister, at present his sole housekeeper, retired to rest. But the moment he opens the door, he finds that not only is she there, sitting by the table near to the solitary lamp, but that she has a companion with her. And well he knows who that must be.

'Dear me, Miss Douglas,' he exclaimed, 'have I kept you so late!'

The young lady, who now rose, with something of a flush over her features—for she had been startled by his sudden entrance—was certainly an extraordinarily pretty creature: not so much handsome, or distinguished, or striking, as altogether pretty and winning and gentle-looking. She was obviously of a pure Highland type: the figure slender and graceful, the head small and beautifully formed; the forehead rather square for a woman, but getting its proper curve from the soft and pretty hair; the features refined and intelligent; the mouth sensitive; the expression a curious sort of seeking to please, as it were, and ready to form itself into an abundant gratitude for the smallest act of kindness. Of course, much of this look was owing to her eyes, which were the true Highland eyes; of a blue grey these were, with somewhat dark lashes; wide apart, and shy, and apprehensive, they reminded one of the startled eyes of some wild animal; but they were entirely human in their quick sympathy, in their gentleness, in their appeal to all the world, as it were, for a favouring word. As for her voice—well, if she used but few of the ordinary Highland phrases, she had undoubtedly a considerable trace of Highland accent; for, although her father was an Edinburgh man, her mother (as the elderly lady very soon let her neighbours know) was one of the Stuarts of Glengask and Orosay; and then again Meenie had lived nearly all her life in the Highlands, her father never having risen above the position of a parish doctor, and welcoming even such local removals as served to improve his position in however slight a way.

'Maggie,' said Miss Douglas (and the beautiful wide-apart eyes were full of a shy apology), 'was feeling a little lonely, and I did not like to leave her.'

'But if I had known,' said he, 'I would not have stayed so late. The gentleman that is come about the shooting is a curious man; it's no the salmon and the grouse and the deer he wants to know about only; it's everything in the country. Now, Maggie, lass, get ye to bed. And I will see you down the road, Miss Douglas.'

'Indeed there is no need for that,' said Meenie, with downcast eyes.

'Would ye have a bogle run away with ye?' he said, good-naturedly.

And so she bade good-night to the little Maggie, and took up some books and drawings she had brought to beguile the time withal; and then she went out into the clear night, followed by the young gamekeeper.

And what a night it was—or rather, might have been—for two lovers! The wide waters of the loch lay still and smooth, with a broad pathway of silver stretching away into the dusk of the eastern hills; not a breath of wind stirred bush or tree; and if Ben Clebrig in the south was mostly a bulk of shadow, far away before them in the northern skies rose the great shoulders of Ben Loyal, pallid in the moonlight, the patches of snow showing white up near the stars. They had left behind them the little hamlet—which merely consisted of a few cottages and the inn; they were alone in this pale, silent world. And down there, beneath the little bridge, ran the placid Mudal Water: and if they had a Bible with them?—and would stand each on one side of the stream?—and clasp hands across? It was a night for lovers' vows.

'Maggie is getting on well with her lessons,' the pretty young lady said, in that gentle voice of hers. 'She is very diligent.'

'I'm sure I'm much obliged to ye, Miss Douglas,' was the respectful answer, 'for the trouble ye take with her. It's an awkward thing to be sae far from a school. I'm thinking I'll have to send her to my brother in Glasgow, and get her put to school there.'

'Oh, indeed, indeed,' said she, 'that will be a change now. And who will look after the cottage for you, Ronald?'

She addressed him thus quite naturally, and without shyness; for no one ever dreamed of calling him anything else.

'Well, I suppose Mrs. McGregor will give the place a redd¹ up from time to time. But a keeper has but half learned his business that canna shift for himself; there's some of the up-country lodges with ne'er a woman-body within a dozen miles o' them.'

'It is your brother the minister that Maggie will be going to?' she said.

'Oh, yes; he is married, and has a family of his own; she will be comfortable there.'

'Well, it is strange,' said she, 'that you should have a brother

¹ 'Redd'—a setting to rights.

in Glasgow, and I a sister, and that your mother should be Highland, and mine too.'

But this was putting himself and her on much too common a footing ; and he was always on his guard against that, however far her gentleness and good-nature might lead her.

' When is your father coming back, Miss Douglas ? ' said he.

' Well, I really do not know,' she said. ' I do not think he has ever had so wide a district to attend to, and we are never sure of his being at home.'

' It must be very lonely for a young lady brought up like you,' he ventured to say, ' that ye should have no companions. And for your mother, too ; I wonder she can stand it.'

' Oh, no,' Meenie said, ' for the people are so friendly with us. And I do not know of any place that I like better.'

By this time they were come to the little wooden gate of the garden, and he opened that for her. Before them was the cottage, with its windows, despite the moonlight on the panes, showing the neat red blinds within. She gave him her hand, for a second.

' Good night, Ronald,' said she, pleasantly.

' Good night, Miss Douglas,' said he ; ' Maggie must not keep you up so late again.'

And therewith he walked away back again along the white road, and only now perceived that by some accident his faithful companion Harry had been shut in when they left. He also discovered, when he got home, that his sister Maggie had been so intent puzzling over some arithmetical mysteries that Meenie had been explaining to her, that she had still further delayed her going to bed.

' What, what ? ' said he, good-humouredly. ' Not in bed yet, lass ? '

' Well, I don't know how it is, Ronald,' the little girl said ; and she rose with a sigh, and gathered up her belongings. ' When Mnhee takes the book, everything's quite clear ; and when she's away, I canna make it out at a '

' Well, off wi' ye now, lass, and sleep over it ; if I catch ye waiting up for me again, ye'll get a talking.'

The little red-headed, freckled-faced lassie was standing at the door, hesitating.

' Ronald,' said she, timidly, ' why do ye call Meenie " Miss Douglas ? " It's no friendly.'

' When ye're a bit older, lass, ye'll understand,' he said, with a laugh.

The little girl was distressed in a vague way, for she had formed a warm affection for Meenie Douglas, and it seemed hard and strange that her own brother should show himself so distant in manner.

'Do you think she's proud? for she's not that,' the little girl made bold to say.

'Have ye never heard o' the Stuarts of Glengask?' said he; and he added grimly, 'My certes, if ye were two or three years older, I'm thinking Mrs. Douglas would have told ye ere now how Sir Alexander used to call on them in Edinburgh every time he came north. Most folk have heard that story. But however, when Meenie, as ye like to call her, goes to live in Edinburgh or Glasgow, or some o' the big towns, of course she'll be Miss Douglas to every one, as she ought to be here, only that she's taken a fancy to you, and, my lass, fairly spoils ye with her kindness. Now, off with ye, and dinna fash your head about what I or any one else calls her; if she's content to be Meenie to you, ye should be proud enough.'

As soon as she was gone he stirred up the peats, lit his pipe, and drew in a chair to the small table near the fire. It was his first pipe that evening, and he wished to have it in comfort. And then, to pass the time, he unlocked and opened a drawer in the table, and began to rummage through the papers collected there—all kinds of shreds and fragments they were, scored over mostly in pencil, and many of them bearing marks as if the writing had been done outside in the rain.

The fact was, that in idle times, when there was no trapping to be done, or shooting of hoodie-crows, or breaking-in of young dogs, he would while away many an hour on the hillside or along the shores of the loch by stringing verses together. They were done for amusement's sake. Sometimes he jotted them down, sometimes he did not. If occasionally, when he had to write a letter to a friend of his at Tongue, or make some request of his brother in Glasgow, he put these epistles into jingling rhyme, that was about all the publication his poetical efforts ever achieved; and he was most particular to conceal from the 'gentry' who came down to the shooting any knowledge that he scribbled at all. He knew it would be against him. He had no wish to figure as one of those local poets (and alas! they have been and are too numerous in Scotland) who, finding within them some small portion of the afflatus of a Burns, or a Motherwell, or a Tannahill, are seduced away from their lawful employment, gain a fleeting popularity in their native village, perhaps attain to the

dignity of a notice in a Glasgow or Edinburgh newspaper, and subsequently and almost inevitably die of drink, in the most abject misery of disappointment. No; if he had any ambition it was not in that direction; it was rather that he should be known as the smartest deer-stalker and the best trainer of dogs in Sutherlandshire. He knew where his strength lay, and where he found content. And then there was another reason why he could not court newspaper applause with these idle rhymes of his. They were nearly all about Meenie Douglas. Meenie-olatry was written all across those scribbled sheets. And of course that was a dark secret known only to himself; and indeed it amused him, as he turned over the loose leaves, to think that all the Stuarts of Glengask and Orosay (and that most severe and terrible of them all, Mrs. Douglas) could not in the least prevent his saying to Meenie just whatever he pleased—within the wooden confines of this drawer. And what had he not said? Sometimes it was but a bit of careless singing—

*Roses white, roses red,
Roses in the lane,
Tell me, roses red and white,
Where is Meenie gane ?
O is she on Loch Loyal's side ?
Or up by Mudal Water ?
In vain the wild doves in the woods
Everywhere have sought her.
Roses white, roses red,
Roses in the lane,
Tell me, roses red and white,
Where is Meenie gane ?*

Well, now, supposing you are far away up on Ben Clebrig's slopes, a gun over your shoulder, and idly looking out for a white hare or a ptarmigan, if you take to humming these careless rhymes to some such tune as 'Cherry Ripe,' who is to hinder? The strongest of all the south winds cannot carry the tidings to Glengask nor yet to Orosay's shores. And so the whole country-side—every hill, and stream, and wood, and rock—came to be associated with Meenie, and saturated with the praise and glory of her. Why, he made the very mountains fight about her!

*Ben Loyal spake to Ben Clebrig,
And they thundered their note of war :
You look down on your sheep and your sheepfolds ;
I see the ocean afar,*

*You look down on the huts and the hamlets,
And the trivial tasks of men;
I see the great ships sailing
Along the northern main.'*

*Ben Clebrig laughed, and the laughter
Shook heaven and earth and sea :
There is something in that small hamlet
That is fair enough for me—*

*Ay, fairer than all your sailing ships
Struck with the morning flame :
A fresh young flower from the hand of God—
Rose Meenie is her name !'*

But at this moment, as he turned over this mass of scraps and fragments, there was one, much more audacious than the rest, that he was in search of, and when he found it a whimsical fancy got into his head. If he were to make out a fair copy of the roughly scrawled lines, and fold that up, and address it to Meenie, just to see how it looked? He took out his blotting-pad, and selected the best sheet of note-paper he could find; and then he wrote (with a touch of amusement, and perhaps of something else, too, in his mind, the while) thus—

*O wilt thou be my dear love ?
(Meenie and Meenie),
O wilt thou be my ain love ?
(My sweet Meenie).
Were you wi' me upon the hill,
It's I would gar the dogs be still,
We'd lie our lone and kiss our fill,
(My love Meenie).*

*Aboon the burn a wild bush grows
(Meenie and Meenie),
And on the bush there blooms a rose
(My sweet Meenie);
And wad ye tak the rose frae me,
And wear it where it fain would be,
It's to your arms that I would flee
(Rose-sweet Meenie !)*

He carefully folded the paper and addressed it outside—so :

*Miss Wilhelmina Stuart Douglas,
Care of James Douglas, Esq., M.D.,
Inver-Mudal,
Sutherlandshire.*

And then he held it out at arm's length, and regarded it, and laughed, in a contemptuous kind of way, at his own folly.

'Well,' he was thinking to himself, 'if it were not for Stuart of Glengask, I suppose the day might come when I could send her a letter like that; but as it is, if they were to hear of any such madness, Glengask and all his kith and kin would be for setting the heather on fire.'

He tossed the letter back on the blotting-pad, and rose and went and stood opposite the blazing peats. This movement aroused the attention of the little terrier, who immediately jumped up from his snooze and began to whimper his expectation. Strang's heart smote him.

'God bless us!' he said aloud. 'When a lass gets into a man's head, there's room for nothing else; he'll forget his best friends. Here, Harry, come along, and I'll get ye your supper, my man.'

He folded up the blotting-pad and locked it in the drawer, blew out the candles, called Harry to follow him into the kitchen, where the small terrier was duly provided for and left on guard. Then he sought out his own small room. He was whistling as he went; and, if he dreamt of anything that night, be sure it was not of the might and majesty of Sir Alexander Stuart of Glengask and Orosay. These verses to Meenie were but playthings and fancies—for idle hours.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE LOCH.

A CONSIDERABLE wind arose during the night; Mr. Hodson did not sleep very well; and, lying awake towards morning, he came to the conclusion that he had been befooled, or rather that he had befooled himself, with regard to that prodigy of a gamekeeper. He argued with himself that his mental faculties must have been dulled by the long day's travel; he had come into the inn jaded and tired; and then finding himself face to face with an ordinarily alert and intrepid intellect, he had no doubt exaggerated the young man's abilities, and made a wonder of him where no wonder was needed. That he was a person of considerable information and showed common sense was likely enough. Mr. Hodson, in his studies of men and things, had heard something of the intelligence and education to be found among the working classes.

in Scotland. He had heard of the hand-loom weavers who were learned botanists ; of the stonemasons who were great geologists ; of the village poets who, if most of their efforts were but imitations of Ferguson and Burns and Tannahill, would here and there, in some chance moment of inspiration, sing out some true and pathetic song, to be taken to the hearts of their countrymen, and added to a treasure-store of rustic minstrelsy such as no other nation in the world has ever produced. At the same time he was rather anxious to meet Strang again, the better to get the measure of him. And as he was also curious to see what this neighbourhood into which he had penetrated looked like, he rose betimes in the morning—indeed, before the day was fully declared.

The wind still moaned about the house, but outside there was no sign of any storm ; on the contrary, everything was strangely still. The lake lay a dark lurid purple in the hollow of the encircling hills ; and these, along the eastern heavens, were of the deepest and softest olive green ; just over them was a line of gleaming salmon-red, keen and resplendent as if molten from a furnace ; and over that again soft saffron-dusky clouds, darkening in hue the higher they hung in the clear pale steel hues of the overhead sky. There was no sign of life anywhere—nothing but the birch woods sloping down to the shore ; the moorland wastes of the lower hills ; and above these the giant bulk and solemn shadows of Ben Clebrig,¹ dark against the dawn. It was a lovely sight ; he began to think he had never before in his life felt himself so much alone. But whence came the sound of the wind that seemed to go moaning down the strath towards the purple lake ?

Well, he made no doubt that it was up towards the north and west that the storm was brewing ; and he remembered that a window in the sitting-room below looked in that direction ; there he would be able to ascertain whether any fishing was practicable. He finished his dressing and went down. The breakfast-table was laid ; a mighty mass of peats was blazing cheerfully in the spacious fireplace. And the storm ? Why, all the wide strath on this northern side of the house was one glow of yellow light in the now spreading sunrise ; and still further away in the north the great shoulders of Ben Loyal² had caught a faint roseate tinge ; and the same pale and beautiful colour seemed to transfuse a large and fleecy cloud that clung around the snow-scarr'd peak. So he came to the conclusion that in this corner

¹ That is, the Hill of the Playing-Trout.

² More properly Ben Laoghal—the Hill of the Calves.

of the glen the wind said more than it meant; and that they might adventure on the loch without risk of being swamped or blown ashore.

The slim, tall Highland lass made her appearance with further plenishings for the table, and 'Good moarning!' she said, in her pretty way, in answer to his greeting.

'Say, now, has that man come down from Tongue yet?'

'No, sir,' said Nelly, 'he wass no come down yet.' And then she looked up with a demure smile. 'They would be keeping the New Year at Tongue last night.'

'Keeping the New Year on the 14th of January?'

'It's the twelfth is the usual day, sir,' she explained, 'but that was Saturday, and they do not like a Saturday night, for they have to stop at twelve o'clock, and so most of them were for keeping it last night.'

'Oh, indeed. Then the festive gentleman won't show up to-day?'

'But it is of no matter whateffer, whether he comes or no; for I am sure that Ronald will be willing to lend a hand. Oh, I am sure of it. I will ask him myself.'

'*You* will ask him?' was Mr. Hodson's internal soliloquy. 'It is to *you* he will grant the favour. Indeed!'

He fixed his eyes on her.

'He is a good-looking young fellow, that Ronald.'

She did not answer that; she was putting the marmalade, and the honey, and the cream on the table.

'He is not married?'

'No, sir.'

'Well, now, when he thinks about getting married, I suppose he'll pretty well have his choice about here?'

'Indeed there iss others besides him,' said Nelly, rather proudly, but her face was red as she opened the door.

Well, whether it was owing to the intervention of Nelly or not, as soon as Mr. Hodson was ready to start he found Ronald waiting for him without; and not only that, but he had already assumed command of the expedition, having sent the one gillie who had arrived down to bale the boat. And then he would overhaul Mr. Hodson's fishing-gear—examining the rods, testing the lines and traces, and rejecting all the spoon baits, angels, sandeels, and what not, that had been supplied by the London tackle-maker, for two or three of the familiar phantom minnows. Mr. Hodson could scarcely believe that this was the same man who last night had been discussing the disestablishment of state

churches and the policy of protecting native industries. He had not a word for anything but the business before him ; and the bold fashion in which he handled those minnows, all bristling with hooks, or drew the catgut traces through his fingers (Mr. Hodson shivered, and seemed to feel his own fingers being cut to the bone), showed that he was as familiar with the loch as with the hillside or the kennel.

‘I’m not much on salmon-fishing myself,’ the American remarked modestly. ‘Guess you’ll have to boss this campaign.’

‘It’s rather early in the season, sir, I’m afraid,’ was the answer. ‘But we might get a fish after all ; and if we do it’ll be the first caught in Scotland this year, I warrant.’

They set out and walked down to the shore of the loch ; and there Mr. Hodson seated himself on the gunwale of the flat-bottomed coble, and watched the two men putting the rods together and fixing the traces. The day had now declared itself; wild and stormy in appearance, but fair on the whole ; great floods of sunshine falling suddenly on the yellow slopes and the russet birch woods ; and shadows coming as rapidly across the far heights of Clebrig, steeping the mountains in gloom. As for the gillie who had been proof against the seductions of keeping the New Year, and who was now down on one knee, biting catgut with his teeth, he was a man as tall and as sallow as Mr. Hodson himself, but with an added expression of intense melancholy and hopelessness. Or was that but temporary ?

‘Duncan doesna like that boat,’ Ronald said, glancing at Mr. Hodson.

The melancholy man did not speak, but shook his head gloomily.

‘Why ?’

As the gillie did not answer, Ronald said—

‘He thinks there is no luck with that boat.’

‘That boat?’ the gillie said, with an angry look towards the hapless coble. ‘She has the worst luck of any boat in Sutherland —*tam her!*’ he added, under his breath.

‘In my country,’ the American said, in his slow way, ‘we don’t mind luck much ; we find perseverance about as good a horse to win with in the end.’

He was soon to have his perseverance tried. Everything being ready they pushed off from the shore, Ronald taking stroke oar, the gillie at the bow ; Mr. Hodson left to pay out the lines of the two rods, and fix these in the stern, when about five-and-thirty yards had gone forth. At first, it is true, he waited and watched

with a trifle of anxiety. He wanted to catch a salmon; it would be something to write about to his daughter; it would be a new experience for himself. But when time passed and the boat was slowly rowed along the loch at a measured distance from the shore, without any touch of anything coming to make the point of either rod tremble, he rather gave up his hope in that direction, and took to talking with Ronald. After all, it was not salmon-fishing alone that had brought him into these wilds.

'I suppose it is really too early in the season,' he observed, without much chagrin.

'Rayther,' said Ronald.

'Rawther,' said the melancholy gillie.

But at that instant something happened that startled every one of them out of their apathy. The top of one of the rods was violently pulled at, and then there was a long, shrill yell of the reel.

'There he is, sir! there he is, sir!' Ronald called.

Mr. Hodson made a grab, blindly—for he had been looking at the scenery around—at one of the rods. It was the wrong one. But before he knew where he was, Ronald had got hold of the other and raised the top so as to keep a strain on the fish. The exchange of the rods was effected in a moment. Then when Ronald had wound in the other line and put the rod at the bow, he took to his oar again, leaving Mr. Hodson to fight his unknown enemy as best he might, but giving him a few words of direction from time to time, quietly, as if it were all a matter of course.

'Reel in, sir, reel in—keep an even strain on him—let him go—let him go if he wants—'

Well, the fish was not a fierce fighter; after the first long rush he scarcely did anything; he kept boring downwards, with a dull, heavy weight. It seemed easy work; and Mr. Hodson—triumphant in the hope of catching his first salmon—was tempted to call aloud to the melancholy gillie—

'Well, Duncan, how about luck now?'

'I think it's a kelt,' the man answered morosely.

But the sinister meaning of this reply was not understood.

'I don't know what you call him,' said Mr. Hodson, holding on with both hands to the long, lithe grilse-rod that was bent almost double. 'Celt or Saxon, I don't know; but I seem to have got a good grip of him.'

Then he heard Ronald say, in an undertone, to the gillie—

'A kelt? No fears. The first rush was too heavy for that.'

And the gillie responded, sullenly—

'He's following the boat like a cow.'

'What is a kelt, anyway?' the American called out. 'Something that swims, I suppose? It ain't a man?'

'I hope it's no a kelt, sir,' said Ronald—but doubtfully.

'But what is a kelt, then, when he's at home?'

'A salmon, sir, that hasna been down to the sea: we'll have to put him back if he is.'

Whirr! went the reel again: the fish, kelt or clean salmon, had struck deep down.

'That's no kelt,' Ronald said instantly, 'or else he's as big as a shark.'

But the melancholy creature at the bow was taking no further interest in the fight. He was sure it was a kelt. Most likely the minnow would be destroyed. Maybe he would break the trace. But a kelt it was. He knew the luck of this 'tammed' boat.

The struggle was a tedious one. The beast kept boring down with the mere force of its weight, but following the coble steadily; and even Ronald, who had been combating his own doubts, at length gave in: he was afraid it was a kelt. Presently the last suspicion of hope was banished. With a tight strain on him, the now exhausted animal began to show near the surface of the water—his long eel-like shape and black back revealing too obviously what manner of creature he was. But this revelation had no effect on the fisherman, who at last beheld the enemy he had been fighting with so long. He grew quite excited. A kelt?—he was a beautiful fine fish! If he could not be eaten he could be stuffed! Twenty pounds he was, if an ounce!—would he throw back such a trophy into the loch?

Ronald was crouching in the stern of the boat, the big landing-net in his hand, watching the slow circling of the kelt as it was being hauled nearer and nearer. His sentiments were of a different kind.

'Ah, you ugly brute!—ah, you rascal!—ah—ah!'—and then there was a deep scoop of the landing-net; and the next minute the huge eel-like beast was in the bottom of the boat, Duncan holding on to its tail, and Ronald gripping it by the gills, while he set to work to get the minnow out of its jaws. And then without further ado—and without stopping to discuss the question of stuffing—the creature was heaved into the water again, with a parting benediction of 'Bah, you brute!' It took its leave rapidly.

'Well, it's a pity, sir,' Ronald said; 'that would have been a twenty-four-pound salmon if he had been down to the sea.'

'It's the luck of this tammed boat,' Duncan said, gloomily.

But Mr. Hodson could not confess to any such keen sense of

disappointment. He had never played so big a fish before, and was rather proud that so slight a grilse-rod and so slender a line should (of course, with some discretion and careful nursing on his part) have overmastered so big a beast. Then he did not eat salmon ; there was no loss in that direction. And as he had not injured the kelt in any way, he reflected that he had enjoyed half-an-hour's excitement without doing harm to anything or anybody, and he was well content. So he paid out the two lines again, and set the rods, and began to renew his talk with Ronald touching the customs connected with the keeping of the New Year.

After all, it was a picturesque kind of occupation, kelts or no kelts. Look at the scene around them—the lapping waters of the loch, a vivid and brilliant blue when the skies were shining fair, or black and stormy again when the clouds were heavy in the heavens ; and always the permanent features of the landscape—the soft yellows of the lower straths, where the withered grass was mixed with the orange bracken ; the soft russet of the leafless birch woods fringing the shores of the lake ; the deep violet shadows of Ben Clebrig stretching up into the long swathes of mist ; and then the far amphitheatre of hills—Ben Hee, and Ben Hope, and Ben Loyal—with sunlight and shade intermingling their ethereal tints, but leaving the snow-streaks always sparkling and clear. He got used to the monotony of the slow circling of the upper waters of the lake. He forgot to watch the points of the rods. He was asking all kinds of questions about the stags and the hinds, about ptarmigan, and white hares, and roe, about the price of sheep, the rents of crofts, the comparative wages of gillies, and shepherds, and foresters, and keepers, and stalkers, and the habits and customs of land-agents and factors. And at length, when it came to lunch-time, and when they landed, and found for him a sheltered place under the lee of a big rock, and when Ronald pointed out to him a grassy bank, and said rather ruefully—

‘ I dinna like to see that place empty, sir. That’s where the gentlemen have the salmon laid out, that they may look at them at lunch-time.’

Mr. Hodson, as he opened the little basket that had been provided for him, answered cheerfully enough—

‘ My good friend, don’t you imagine that I feel like giving it up yet. I’m not finished with this lake, and I’ll back perseverance against luck any day. Seems to me we’ve done very well so far ; I’m con-tent.’

By-and-by they went back into the coble again, and resumed

their patient pursuit; and there is little doubt that by this time Ronald had come to the conclusion that this stranger who had come amongst them was a singularly odd and whimsical person. It was remarkable enough that he should have undertaken this long and solitary journey in order to fish for salmon, and then show himself quite indifferent as to whether he got any or not; and it was scarcely human for any one to betray no disappointment whatever when the first fish caught proved to be a kelt; but it was still stranger that a man rich enough to talk about renting a deer-forest should busy himself with the petty affairs of the very poorest people around. Why, he wanted to know how much Nelly the housemaid could possibly save on her year's wages; whether she was supposed to lay by something as against her wedding-day; or whether any of the lads about would marry her for her pretty face alone. And when he discovered that Mr. Murray, the innkeeper, was about to give a New Year supper and dance to the lads and lasses of the neighbourhood, he made no scruple about hinting plainly that he would be glad of an invitation to join that festive party.

'Not if I'm going to be anything of a wet blanket,' he said, candidly. 'My dancing days are over, and I'm not much in the way of singing; but I'll tell them an American story; or I'll present them with a barrel of whisky—if that will keep the fun going.'

'I'm sure they'll be very glad, sir,' Ronald said, 'if ye just come and look on. When there's gentlemen at the Lodge, they generally come down to hear the pipes, and the young gentlemen have a dance too.'

'What night did you say?'

'Monday next, sir.'

Well, he had only intended remaining here for a day or two, to see what the place was like; but this temptation was too great. Here was a famous opportunity for the pursuit of his favourite study—the study of life and manners. This, had Ronald but known it, was the constant and engrossing occupation that enabled this contented traveller to accept with equanimity the ill-luck of kelt-catching; it was a hobby he could carry about with him everywhere; it gave a continuous interest to every hour of his life. He cared little for the analyses of science; he cared less for philosophical systems; metaphysics he laughed at; but men and women—the problems of their lives and surroundings, their diverse fortunes and aspirations and dealings with each other—that was the one and constant subject that engrossed his

interest. No doubt there was a little more than this; it was not merely as an abstract study that he was so fond of getting to know how people lived. The fact was that, even after having made ample provision for his family, he still remained possessed of a large fortune; his own expenditure was moderate; and he liked to go about with the consciousness that here or there, as occasion served, he could play the part of a little Providence. It was a harmless vanity; moreover, he was a shrewd man, not likely to be deceived by spurious appeals for charity. Many was the young artist whom he had introduced to buyers; many the young clerk whom he had helped to a better situation; more than one young woman in the humblest of circumstances had suddenly found herself enabled to purchase her wedding outfit (with a trifle over, towards the giving her greater value in her lover's eyes), through the mysterious benevolence of some unknown benefactor. This man had been brought up in a country where every one is restlessly pushing forward; and being possessed of abundant means, and a friendly disposition, it seemed the most natural thing in the world that here or there, at a fitting opportunity, he should lend a helping hand. And there was always this possibility present to him—this sense of power—as he made those minute inquiries of his into the conditions of the lives of those amongst whom he chanced to be living.

The short winter day was drawing to a close; the brilliant steely blue of the driven water had given place to a livid grey; and the faint gleams of saffron-yellow were dying out in the western skies.

'Suppose we'd better be going home now,' Mr. Hodson remarked at a venture, and with no great disappointment in his tone.

'I'm afraid, sir, there's no much chance now,' Ronald said.

'We must call again; they're not at home to-day,' the other remarked, and began with much complacency to reel in one of the lines.

He was doing so slowly, and the men were as slowly pulling in for the shore in the gathering dusk, when *whirr!* went the other reel. The loud and sudden shriek in this silence was a startling thing; and no less so was the springing into the air—at apparently an immense distance away—of some creature, kelt or salmon, that fell into the water again with a mighty splash. Instinctively Mr. Hodson had gripped this rod, and passed the other one he had been reeling in to Strang. There was no time to be lost. *Whirr!* went another dozen yards of line; and again the fish sprang into the air—this time plainly visible.

'A clean fish, sir ! a clean fish !' was the welcome cry.

But there was no time to hazard doubts or ask questions ; this sudden visitor at the end of the line had not at all made up his mind to be easily captured. First of all he came sailing in quietly towards the boat, giving the fisherman all he could do to reel in and keep a strain on him ; then he whirled out the line so suddenly that the rod was nearly bent double ; and then, in deep water, he kept persistently sulking and boring, refusing to yield an inch. This was a temporary respite.

'Well, now, is this one all right ?' Mr. Hodson called out—but he was rather bewildered, for he knew not what this violent beast might not be after next, and the gathering darkness looked strange, the shadows of Clebrig overhead seeming to blot out the sky.

'A clean fish, sir,' was the confident answer.

'No doubt o' that, sir,' even the melancholy Duncan admitted ; for he foresaw a dram now, if not a tip in actual money.

Then slowly and slowly the salmon began to yield to the strain on him—which was considerable, for this was the heavier of the two rods—and quickly the line was got in, the pliant curve of the rod remaining always the same ; while Mr. Hodson flattered himself that he was doing very well now, and that he was surely becoming the master of the situation. But the next instant something happened that his mind was not rapid enough to comprehend : something dreadful and horrible and sudden : there was a whirring out of the reel so rapid that he had to lower the point of the rod almost to the water ; then the fish made one flashing spring along the surface—and this time he saw the creature, a gleam of silver in the dusk—and then, to his unspeakable dismay and mortification, he felt the line quite slack. He did utter a little monosyllable.

'He's off, sir,' the melancholy gillie said in a tone of sad resignation.

'Not a bit, sir, not a bit ! Reel in, quick !' Ronald called to him : and the fisherman had sense enough to throw the rod as far back as he could to see if there was yet some strain on it. Undoubtedly the fish was still there. Moreover, this last cantrip seemed to have taken the spirit out of him. By-and-by, with a strong, steady strain on him, he suffered himself to be guided more and more towards the boat, until, now and again, they could see a faint gleam in the dark water ; and now Ronald had relinquished his oar, and was crouching down in the stern—this time not with the landing-net in his hand, but with the bright steel clip just resting on the gunwale.

'He's showing the white feather now, sir ; give him a little more of the butt.'

However, he had not quite given in yet : each time he came in sight of the boat, he would make another ineffectual rush, but rarely getting down deeper than three or four yards. And then, with a short line and the butt well towards him, he began to make slow semicircles this way and that ; and always he was being steadily hauled nearer the coble ; until with one quick dip and powerful upward pull Ronald had got him transfix'd on the gaff and landed—the huge, gleaming, beautiful silver creature!—in the bottom of the boat.

'Well done, sir !—a clean fish!—a beauty—the first caught in Scotland this year, I know !'—these were the exclamations he heard now ; but he scarcely knew how it had all happened ; for he had been more excited than he was aware of. He felt a vague and general sense of satisfaction ; wanted to give the men a glass of whisky, and had none to give them ; thought that the capture of a salmon was a noble thing ; would have liked his daughter Carry to hear the tidings at once ; and had a kind of general purpose to devote the rest of that year to salmon-fishing in the Highlands. From this entrancement he was awakened by a dispute between the two men as to the size of the fish.

'He's twelve pounds, and no more,' the melancholy Duncan said, eyeing him all over.

'Look at his shoulders, man,' Ronald rejoined. 'Fourteen pounds if he's an ounce. Duncan, lad, ye've been put off your guessing by the sight of the kelt.'

'He's a good fish whateffer,' Duncan was constrained to admit—for he still foresaw that prospect of a dram when they returned to the inn, with perhaps a more substantial handselling of good luck.

Of course, they could do no more fishing that afternoon, for it was nearly dark ; but it was wonderful how the capture of this single salmon seemed to raise the spirits of the little party as they got ashore and walked home. There was a kind of excitement in the evening air. They talked in a rapid and eager way—about what the fish had done ; what were the chances of such and such a rush ; the probable length of time it had been up from the sea ; the beauty of its shape ; the smallness of its head ; the freshness of its colour, and so forth—and there was a kind of jubilation abroad. The first fish caught in Scotland that year!—of course, it must be packed forthwith and sent south to his daughter Carry and her friends. And Mr. Hodson was quite facetious with the pretty Nelly when she came in to lay the table for dinner ;

and would have her say whether she had not yet fixed her mind on one or other of these young fellows around. As for the small hamlet of Inver-Mudal, it was about as solitary and forlorn a habitation as any to be found in the wilds of northern Scotland ; and he was there all by himself ; but with the blazing peat-fire, and the brilliant white cloth on the dinner-table, and the consciousness that the firm, stout-shouldered, clean-run fourteen-pounder was lying in the dairy on a slab of cold stone, he considered that Inver-Mudal was a most enjoyable, and sociable, and comfortable place, and that he had not felt himself so snug and so much at home for many and many a day.

CHAPTER IV.

A LETTER.

AFTER dinner he found himself with a pretty long evening before him ; and thought he could not do better than devote the major part of it to writing to his daughter. He would not confess to himself that he wanted her to know at once that he had caught his first salmon ; that was but a trivial incident in the life of a philosopher and student of mankind ; still she would be glad to hear of his adventures ; and it was not an unpleasant way of passing the time. So he wrote as follows :—

‘ My darling Carry,—You will be rejoiced to learn that I have discovered a harbour of refuge for you, where that minute organ you call your mind may lay aside its heaviest load of trouble. Here, at last, is one corner of Europe where you need have no fear of anybody mistaking you for one of the Boston girls of fiction ; indeed you might go about all day talking your beloved Texas with impunity ; although, my dear young lady, that is a habit you would do well to drop, for sooner or later it will get you into trouble when you are least expecting it. But short of scalping children or using a bowie-knife for a fork, I think you might do or say anything you pleased here ; it is the most out-of-the-world sort of place ; a community of fifteen or twenty, I should guess, hidden away in a hole of a valley, and separated from the rest of the universe by great ranges of mountains and interminable miles of moorland. The people seem very friendly, but shy ; and I don’t quite catch on to them yet, for their speech bothers me—scarcely any two of them seem to have the same accent ; but I hope to get to know something more about them

next Monday, when they have a New Year celebration, which I am invited to the same. Would you like to join in? by all means come if you care to; the station is Lairg; wire, and I will meet you there. You will miss the wild excitement of paying afternoon calls and drinking tea; but you will get sunlight, and fresh air into your lungs; and the talk about the fierce weather is all nonsense. There is a sprinkling of snow on the higher hills, but the temperature is quite agreeable. In any case I expect you to come here with me in March, when the salmon-fishing will begin in earnest; and I have no doubt you will have made the acquaintance of the whole of the people in a couple of days, shy as they are. There is another point I have not forgotten. As you seem determined to set yourself up for your lifetime with reminiscences of your travels in Europe, I have had to consider what you could carry away from here. I am afraid that Inver-Mudal jewellery wouldn't make much of a show; and I haven't seen any shell-necklaces, or silk scarves, or blue pots about. But what about a Highland maid? I suppose the N.Y. Customs officers wouldn't charge much for that article of *vertu*. Now the maid who waits on me here is very pretty, and gentle in manner; and I suppose she could be induced to go—for a proper consideration; and you could begin the training of her now, and have her quite accomplished by the time we got home. Sounds rather like slavery, don't it?—but she would be going to the land of the free, and the banner would wave over her. She gets eighty dollars a year and her board; I'd go better than that, if you took a fancy to her.

' But the most remarkable person here—perhaps it is the contrast between his personal abilities and his position that is the striking thing—is a deer-stalker and gamekeeper whom they familiarly call Ronald; and I confess that, with all I had heard of the intelligence of the Scotch peasantry, this fellow, before I had been talking with him ten minutes, rather made me open my eyes. And yet, looking back over the different subjects we fell upon, I don't know that he said anything so very remarkable on any one of them. I think it is rather the personal character of the man that is impressive—the manliness and independence of his judgment, and yet his readiness to consider the other side if you can convince him; his frank (and, I should say, foolish) recognition of the differences of social position; and then a kind of curious self-respect he has which refuses to allow him to become quite friendly, though you may be willing enough to forget that you are talking of taking a shooting on which he is

one of the *employés*, and anxious only to converse with him as man to man. I'm afraid this is rather mixed, but you would have to see him to understand quite well what manner of person he is—a good-looking fellow too, well knit together, with a keen, hard face, full of life and a half-concealed force of humour. I should judge he would make a pretty fair king of good company in the unrestrained intercourse of a few boon-companions; and I imagine he has a hard head if there should be any drinking going on. What to do with him I don't know. It is absurd he should be where he is. His brother has been to college, taken his degree, and is now in the Scotch Church somewhere. But this fellow seems quite content to trap foxes and shoot grey crows, and, in the autumn, look after the grouse-shooting and deer-stalking of other people. A man of his brains would not be in that position for a fortnight in our country. Here everything is fixed. He thinks it is *natural* for him to be in a subservient position. And yet there is a curious independence about the fellow; I don't know what inducement I could put before him to get him out of it. Suppose we said, "Come you with us to America, and we'll run you for President;" I'm afraid he'd quote Kingsley in our face, and be off to "where the dun deer lie." In fact his reverence for the star-spangled banner appears to be of a mitigated description. I found he knew more than I expected about our wire-pulling gentry at home; but then, on the other hand, I discovered that he knew nothing about the necessity of protecting the industries of a young country beyond what he had read in the English papers, and you know what high old Mother Hubbardism that is. Now I want to do something for this fellow, and don't know how. He's too good a man to be thrown away—a kind of upper servant, as it were, of his lordship. He has plenty of ability and he has plenty of knowledge in a dozen different directions, if it only could be *applied*. But then he is a dogged kind of a creature—he is not pliant; if you can show him sufficient reason for changing, he might change, otherwise not one inch will he budge. What is the inducement to be? It is useless offering him an allotment of land in Nebraska; here he has miles and miles of the most picturesque territory conceivable, of which, save for a month or two in the autumn, he is the absolute master. He enjoys an ownership over these hills and moors and lochs more obvious than that of the Duke himself; he would not exchange that for the possession of a bit of table-land on the Platte Valley, unless he were a fool, and that he is far from being. The Presidentship? Well, I waved your beloved banner over

him, but he didn't enthuse worth a cent. However, I must cast about and see what is to be done with him, for I am really interested in the man.'

At this moment there was a tapping at the door, and Nelly appeared with a huge armful of peats, which she began to build up dexterously in the fireplace, always leaving the central funnel open.

'Say, my girl, when will this letter go south?' Mr. Hodson asked.

'To-morrow moarning,' was the answer.

'And the fish, too?'

'Yes, sir, by the mail cart.'

'Has Duncan packed it in the rushes yet?'

'Oh no, sir, Ronald will do that; he can do it better as any of them; he would not let any one else do it, for they're saying it iss the first fish of the year, and he's very proud of your getting the fish, sir.'

'*Ich auch!*' observed Mr. Hodson to himself; and he would probably have continued the conversation but that suddenly a strange noise was heard, coming from some distant part of the inn—a harsh, high note, all in monotone.

'What's that, now, Nelly?'

'It will be Ronald tuning his pipes,' said she, as she was going to the door.

'Oh, he can play the pipes too?'

'Indeed yes, sir; and better as any in Sutherland, I hef heard them say,' she added.

Just as she opened the door the drones and chanter broke away into a shrill and lively march that seemed to flood the house with its penetrating tones.

'I think it's "Dornoch Links" he's playing,' Nelly said, with a quiet smile, 'for there's some of the fisher-lads come through on their way to Tongue.'

She left then; but the solitary occupant of the sitting-room thought he could not do better than go to the door and listen for a while to this strange sort of music, which he had never heard played properly before. And while he could scarcely tell one tune from another except by the time—the slow, wailing, melancholy Lament, for example, was easily enough distinguished from the bright and lively Strathspey—here and there occurred an air—the '79th's Farewell,' or the 'Barren Rocks of Aden,' or the 'Pibroch of Donald Dhu,' had he but known the names of them

—which had a stately and martial ring about it ; he guessed that it was meant to lead the tramp of soldiers. And he said to himself—

‘ Here, now, is this fellow who might be piper to a Highland regiment ; and I dare say all the use he makes of his skill is to walk up and down outside the dining-room window of the Lodge, and play to a lot of white-kneed Englishmen when they come down for the autumn shooting.’

He returned to his letter.

‘ I have the honour to inform you that the first salmon caught on any Scotch loch this year was caught by me this afternoon ; and to-morrow will be on its way to you. If you don’t believe the story, look at the salmon itself for evidence. And as regards this loch-fishing, it appears to me you might have a turn at it when we come up in March—taking one of the two rods ; a little practice with Indian clubs meanwhile would enable you to make a better fight of it when you have to keep a continuous strain on a fourteen-pound fish for twenty minutes or half an hour. You must have some amusement or occupation ; for there is no society —except, by the way, the doctor’s daughter, who might be a companion for you. I have not seen her yet ; but the hand-maiden I have mentioned above informs me that she is “a ferry pretty young lady, and ferry much thought of, and of a ferry great family too.” I should not imagine, however, that her Highland pride of blood would bar the way against your making her acquaintance ; her father is merely the parish doctor—or rather, the district doctor, for he has either two or three parishes to look after—and I don’t suppose his emoluments are colossal. They have a pretty cottage ; it is the swell feature of the village, if you can call the few small and widely scattered houses a village. You could practise Texas talk on her all day long ; I dare say she wouldn’t know.

‘ Good night ; it’s rather sleepy work being out in that boat in the cold.

‘ Your affectionate

‘ PAPPA.’

Well, by this time the fisher-lads had left the inn and were off on the way to Tongue—and glad enough to have a moonlight night for the weary trudge. Ronald remained behind for a while, drinking a glass of ale with the innkeeper ; and generally having to keep his wits about him, for there was a good deal of banter going on. Old John Murray was a facetious person, and would

have it that Nelly was setting her cap at Ronald ; while the blushing Nelly, for her part, declared that Ronald was nothing but a poor south-country body ; while he in fair warfare had to retort that she was ‘as Hielan’s a Mull drover.’ The quarrel was not a deadly one ; and when Ronald took up his pipes in order to go home, he called out to her in parting—

‘Nelly, lass, see you get the lads to clean out the barn ere Monday next ; and put on your best ribbons, lassie ; I’m thinking they’ll be for having a spring o’ Tullochgorum.’

The pipes were over his shoulder as he walked away along the moonlit road ; but he did not tune up ; he had had enough playing for that evening. And be sure that in his mind there was no discontent because he had no allotment of land on the Platte Valley, nor yet a place in a Chicago bank, nor the glory of being pipe-major to a Highland regiment. He was perfectly content as he was ; and knew naught of these things. If there was any matter troubling him—on this still and moonlight night, as he walked blithely along, inhaling the keen sweet air, and conscious of the companionship of the faithful Harry—it was that the jog-trot kind of tune he had invented for certain verses did not seem to have sufficient definiteness about it. But then the verses themselves—as they kept time to his tramp on the road—were careless and light-hearted enough :

*The blossom was white on the blackthorn tree,
And the mavis was singing rarely ;
When Meenie, Love Meenie, walked out wi’ me,
All in the springtime early.*

*‘Meenie, Love Meenie, your face let me see,
Meenie, come answer me fairly ;
Meenie, Love Meenie, will you wed me,
All in the springtime early ?’*

*Meenie but laughed ; and kentna the pain
That shot through my heart fu’ sairly :
‘Kind sir, it’s a maid that I would remain,
All in the springtime early.’*

And ‘Hey, Harry, lad,’ he was saying, as he entered the cottage, and went into the little parlour, where a candle had been left burning, ‘we’ll have our supper together now ; for between you and me I’m just as hungry as a gled.’

(To be continued.)

Two Sunlike Planets.

IN my paper entitled 'A New Theory of Sun-spots' I pointed out certain considerations which involve in reality changed ideas as to the sun's actual condition—but ideas not altogether new, since they were propounded by me several years since. According to these views the surface of the sun, as we see it, is simply the outside of a region of clouds, having a visible depth of some ten thousand miles, and separated from the sun's actual surface by a region of vaporous matter probably many tens of thousands of miles in depth. I pointed to three kinds of evidence in favour of this view, in fact absolutely demonstrating its justice: first, the varying rate at which the sun-spots are carried round, those near the equator completing seven circuits while those farthest from the equator complete but six; secondly, the evidence of our earth's crust, which tells us that the sun has been at work far longer than we could infer if his real globe were as large as the globe we see; and, thirdly, certain mathematical calculations by Professor G. H. Darwin, which show that unless the sun's central parts were much more compressed than the rest there would be measurable flattening at his poles. The consideration of the vast distance thus shown to separate the real surface of the sun from the surface we see, led to the inference that the cloud region which constitutes his apparent surface can hardly exist within an atmospheric envelope properly so called, simply because within such an envelope the pressures would increase so greatly with approach towards the sun's centre that within much less than the hundredth part of the distance separating that surface from the cloud region, pressures changing the gaseous into liquid matter must inevitably arise. Then we were led to consider the evidence given by the sun-spots, prominences, and corona, finding reason to believe that the sun-spots are phenomena of eruption from beneath the real surface of the sun, that in the mighty eruptions producing these phenomena matter is driven out through the region of the coloured flames, outwards even through the whole coronal region,

farther yet to the very outskirts of the solar system, nay even in some cases beyond the limits of the solar system into the interstellar regions.

Now it is becoming generally recognised that in suns and planets, in all the orbs in fact which people space, there are stages of existence akin to the stages of life. There is a period of preparation, a period of youth, a period of mid-life, a period of decay, and finally there comes the end of life. The stages of an orb's life may be described as, in the main, stages of cooling. In suns we find evidence of such changes in the different condition (as shown by the spectroscope) of such orbs as Sirius, Vega, and Altair on the one hand, and orbs like our own sun, much smaller and therefore much more advanced in orb life, on the other. But also we find much older suns than ours in the orange-red and yellow stars, and older orbs still in the blood-red and garnet-tinted suns shown by the telescope in various parts of the star depths. Nor do astronomers doubt that there are older suns yet, suns which have passed on to the last stage of all (mayhap), the stage of darkness. Moreover, as it is a known law of cooling bodies that the larger a cooling mass of given temperature is, the longer will be the stages of its cooling,¹ we may safely assume that, apart from differences (which may nevertheless be enormous) in the time of beginning orb life, the larger suns, having much longer periods of life, will have passed through less of their longer lives than the smaller suns.

If we extend such considerations to our own solar system, as indeed we may do with much more confidence, since, forming a single system, it has doubtless had a simple history, we find certain very interesting ideas suggesting themselves in relation to the various orders of bodies forming that system. We see that the giant planets, for example, being very much smaller than the sun, must have much shorter lives. The sun exceeds Jupiter 1,047 times in mass, and Saturn is less than a third even of Jupiter. It is clear that, even granting the sun a start of millions of years of orb life as compared with these giant members of his family, he would still be very much younger than they are in development. We

¹ The law is experimentally verified in a great number of well-known cases, but the reason is not far to seek. The quantity of heat in a mass of matter, at a given temperature, is of course proportional to the mass (comparing bodies of the same constitution), which varies as the cube or third power of the linear dimensions, whereas the rate of parting with the heat is necessarily proportional to the surface whence alone the heat can pass, that is to the square of the linear dimensions. Hence, in bodies of the same substance and similar in shape, the duration of a process of cooling is proportional to the linear dimensions.

understand, in fact, how it is that, whereas he is in the sunlike or glowing vaporous stage, they no longer have the sunlike aspect. But, on the other hand, they exceed our earth so enormously both in size and in mass, that by parity of reasoning she ought to be very much older than they are (in development always, I mean, not in years). Jupiter exceeds her 310 times, Saturn exceeds her 97 times in mass, and such differences as these imply not only mere difference in degree but in kind. Jupiter and Saturn must not only be more youthful than the earth, but in a different stage of orb life altogether. We may say that they must be in a stage intermediate between the sunlike and the earthlike—they may be expected to show under careful study evidence of conditions alien to those found in the sun, as probably at least as of conditions resembling those existing in the case of our earth.

It seems to me that, this being so, we may reasonably look to the giant planets to give evidence respecting the sunlike stage of orb life, to show features such as we have recognised in the sun—however readily we admit, as of course we must, that they are not sunlike now.

At the very outset of the inquiry we find a resemblance which is at least striking, even if be merely one of those which are rather accidental than actually significant. Jupiter's system is an almost perfect miniature of the central part of the solar system. If for a moment we regard Jupiter and the other outside giants of the system as not really forming part of the sun's family, then that family would consist of four worlds (one of them double): Mercury, Venus, the Earth-and-Moon, and Mars. Jupiter similarly has a family of four worlds, his four moons, and the paths of these lie at distances closely corresponding, but on a smaller scale, to the distances separating the paths of the terrestrial planets. Moreover the moons of Jupiter are by no means such insignificant bodies as their telescopic aspect might seem to suggest. The least of them has a surface as large as that of North and South America together,—the largest is not much smaller than the planet Mercury. In fact the one feature which spoils the perfection of the miniature picture formed by the Jovian system is that his moons are relatively very much larger than the planets. Again, in the case of Saturn we have a system of eight worlds, the largest of which is nearly as large as Mars, the second in size nearly as large as Mercury, while the least has a surface large enough to be the abode of many millions of living creatures.

We thus see in Jupiter and Saturn, as in the sun, ruling orbs in one sense, orbs serving (but generously) in another sense. Each bears potent sway over a family of worlds, but each pours forth in plenty rays of light and heat by which life on those worlds may be nourished. This is true even if we have to regard Jupiter and Saturn as only reflecting rays of solar light and heat, simply because their power to so deflect towards their subordinate worlds the rays sent forth by the supreme centre is so enormous. I have calculated that in the skies of his nearest moon Jupiter must show a disc 1,300 times as large as that of the full moon. In the heavens as seen from the innermost Saturnian satellite, the ringed planet must appear so enormous that when the outer edge of his ring system touches the horizon the opposite part of that outer rim must reach to the point overhead.¹

Here then at once is a solar attribute possessed by the giant planets—unlike the earth, they are like the sun in being the centres of systems of circling worlds. So far as analogy can be our guide at all in such matters, and I must admit it is not an altogether trustworthy guide, it would seem that we should rather regard Jupiter and Saturn as orbs nourishing life in a system of circling worlds, than as themselves worlds fit to be the abode of multitudinous forms of life.

But now let us turn to the more trustworthy evidence afforded by physical features—let us see what the telescopic aspect of the giant planets, and what the spectroscopic analysis of their light, may suggest as to their actual condition.

Here again, however, we are immediately struck by solar rather than by terrestrial features. We see a surface of cloud, not a surface of land and water. We see evidence of enormously rapid rotation. We recognise the existence of parallel banks or belts of clouds, akin in some degree to the parallel zones along which the sun-spots travel. When we watch the movements of

¹ It may be remarked in passing how carelessly writers on matters astronomical have accepted and repeated the suggestion of Brewster, Whewell, Chalmers, and others, that the four moons of Jupiter make up to that planet for the small amount of sunlight he receives from the sun, while the eight moons and the ring system of Saturn play a like part, with even greater effect, for that still remoter planet. As a matter of fact the total amount of sunlight reflected by all the moons of Jupiter is barely the sixteenth part of that reflected by our full moon; and the eight moons of Saturn reflect rather less. As for the rings of Saturn, I have shown in my treatise on *Saturn and its System*, by mathematical demonstration which there is no disputing, that they serve not to add to the planet's supply of sunlight, but enormously to reduce it, actually casting large parts of the planet into total eclipse lasting for five or six of our years at a stretch, and causing scarcely less disastrous eclipses to every part of the planet from which the rings can be seen at all.

the markings on the belts, we find that they are not only carried round by the rotational motion, but have different rates of motion, indicating (much as we found in the sun's case) widely different rates of rotation in the various zones of the planet.

Now the interpretation we were forced in the sun's case to place upon the existence of different rates of rotation in the visible surface, was that the real surface of the sun lies very far below the surface of clouds which we actually see. We found other evidence which not merely supported but actually demonstrated this view. Let us see how the case stands with Jupiter. Is there any other evidence to confirm the belief that the visible cloud-surface lies at an enormous distance above the surface we see?

It appears to me that, although in this case we want the evidence which in the sun's case we derived from the crust of the earth, we have very strong evidence to show that the real globe of Jupiter is very much smaller than the globe we see and measure.

Compare first the quantity of matter contained in Jupiter with what we should infer from his apparent size. He is 1,250 times as large as the earth, but only 310 times as massive. Yet every part of that great mass of his possesses the power of attraction to compress the planet's substance towards the centre. Made, as in all probability¹ Jupiter is, of the same materials as the earth, we might fairly expect him to be a much denser rather than a much rarer planet. Even if his whole mass were molten through intensity of heat, still we might expect the slight expansion so arising to do little more than counterbalance the effect of the enormous self-contracting power residing in his mass or weight, even if it did as much. We are justified, then, seeing his mean density is but one-fourth of the earth's—or, as it chances, almost exactly the same as the sun's—in inferring that he is not so large as he looks. Doubtless his real globe is at the very least as dense as the earth's. In this case the volume of the true Jupiter is but one-fourth the volume of that globular space, enclosed within vast cloud-layers, which we measure and regard as the real globe of the planet. This would assign to the true Jupiter a diameter of less than two-thirds his measured diameter, or, making his radius about 26,000 miles, instead of about 40,000

¹ Since the central sun is of the same material as the earth—one of his family—we may infer that he is of the same material as the other members of his family (for why should the earth differ from the rest?) If so, it follows that all the members of the solar system are formed of the same materials.

miles, would leave a distance of at least 14,000 miles intervening between the surface of the real globe and that outside surface which we see and measure.

Next take the case of Jupiter's brother giant Saturn. Here we have apparently an even younger orb than Jupiter. Saturn's ring system is in reality a part as yet unfinished of his system of dependent bodies. It consists of multitudes of tiny bodies travelling in the same general plane, and like sands on the seashore for number. Hereafter, under the mighty forces of the planet's energy of attraction, this system of rings will be broken up to form two or three other worlds akin to the eight satellites which already travel round the planet. While we thus find evidence of extreme youth in the ring system, we find confirmation in the singularly small density of Saturn. With a volume exceeding that of the earth seven hundredfold, he has less than one hundred times her mass. We must explain this in the same way as in Jupiter's case. We cannot suppose Saturn's real orb to be more than a hundred times the earth's globe in volume, that is, one-seventh part of the volume of the cloud-enwrapped space we measure as if it were Saturn's veritable globe. This would make the diameter of Saturn fully 16,000 miles below the surface we see and measure; or, taking the mean radius of his cloud-surface at 36,000 miles, his actual radius about 20,000 miles.

Observe, now, the evidence of those parallel belts into which the cloud-surface both of Jupiter and of Saturn is nearly always arranged. If we could imagine anything akin—*constantly*—to the trade and counter-trade wind-zones on the earth in these belts, we might admit the same cause in explanation of them, the existence, namely, of atmospheric currents from the equatorial towards the polar regions and from the polar towards the equatorial regions. But no one who has ever seen these cloud-belts through a good telescope can admit such an explanation for an instant. Yet there is only one way in which cloud-belts in the direction of a planet's rotation can possibly be explained. They must be due to differences in the rates of rotation, causing a rush of cloud masses forwards where regions of slower rotation are entered, and backwards where the regions reached are of more rapid rotation than those left. If these differences in rotational rate are not due to different distances from the axis in different *latitudes*—and manifestly they are not so caused—they must be due to difference of distance from the axis at different *levels*. Thus, then, in the multitudinous and ever-varying cloud-belts of

the giant planets we have evidence of the vast range of distance from and towards the centre over which the cloud-masses around these planets can travel. When they rise they lag behind in long trailing masses, when they descend they rush forwards—in either case until frictional resistances cause them to attain the same rate of rotational progress as the surrounding masses.

But, further, there is an argument in the case of the giant planets akin to that which was deduced from Professor G. H. Darwin's reasoning in the case of the sun. It has been shown that the perturbations of the movements of the inner satellites both of Jupiter and Saturn are absolutely inconsistent with the belief that the apparent globe of either planet is really occupied by the planet's mass. It is rendered certain by these researches that the real globe of either planet is very much smaller than the globe we see. How much smaller has not yet been ascertained by this method, but it is certain that the difference of size must be enormous and akin to that suggested by the other lines of reasoning considered above.

In passing I may consider a difficulty which, though it could not obviate the force of the evidence already adduced, deserves attention even were it for no other reason than this, that nearly always the study of difficulties leads to the recognition of new truths. It follows necessarily from the vastness of the distances intervening between the visible surface of the giant planets and the actual surface of their globes, that the rarity of the outer regions which we see must be enormous. Nay, we seem forced to recognise here something like what we recognised in the case of the sun—the absence of any continuous atmospheric pressure throughout the cloud-laden regions surrounding the giant planets: for, according to all the known laws of gaseous pressure, the densities attained even at depths of a hundred miles below a cloud region existing at such pressures as prevail within our own cloud strata would be enormous. But if we admit such exceeding tenuity in the cloud region forming the visible outer surface of the giant planets, it seems at a first view as though the edge of these planets' discs ought not to be sharply defined, but resemble rather a soft haze or mist. But this idea will be corrected if we consider the real state of things in a tenuous cloud region, such as we suppose to form the outer part of the visible surface of Jupiter or Saturn. At the distance of either planet a depth of fifty miles would appear in the most powerful telescope as the finest possible line. But a line of sight passing

fifty miles below the outermost cloud surface on Jupiter would traverse no less than 4,000 miles within that surface, that is, along a range of 4,000 miles of cloud. A line of sight passing even but five miles below the outer surface would pass through 1,300 miles of cloud-strewn space. Is it likely that, however thinly the clouds might be strewn along a range of 1,000 miles, a line of sight could actually pierce through, so as to reach the region beyond? If a line of sight could not so pass through, then that is equivalent to saying that the planet up to that distance—less than four or five miles from its apparent edge—would appear as if absolutely opaque. Yet four miles would be far beyond the power of the largest telescope to appreciate at Jupiter's distance. Therefore, unless the clouds are so thinly strewn that the eye can pierce through a range of 1,000, nay of fully 4,000, miles of them, it is certain that the outline of the planet's disc must appear as sharp and continuous as though the planet were a solid globe. In the case of Saturn the argument is even stronger, for he is very much farther away than Jupiter, so that 100 miles at Saturn's mean distance from us would look no larger than fifty miles at Jupiter's. Now a line of sight, passing 100 miles below the visible surface of Saturn, would have to traverse a range of some 4,700 miles of cloud-strewn space.

But how if it shall appear that, though usually the cloud-layers around Jupiter suffice to give to the edge of his disc a well-defined appearance, not readily distinguishable from that of a solid globe (except of course for the parallel belts which are so strongly suggestive of a cloud-surface), yet at times the outer parts of Jupiter's disc are transparent, to such a degree that a line of sight through 20,000 miles of the cloud-strewn region can yet pass onwards to detect faintly illuminated matter beyond? This has happened, in four cases at least,—and it need hardly perhaps be said that its occurrence even once would suffice to prove all that such an observation, even though repeated a hundred times, could establish.

Let us consider the evidence.

The four moons of Jupiter, in their movements around the planet, pass athwart his face in one direction when on the hither side, and in the opposite direction when beyond him. They are all the time illuminated by the sun's light—except, of course, when they are in the planet's shadow. The degree of this illumination depends in part on the nature of their surfaces, but chiefly on their distance from the sun. Supposing them to have the same

reflective capacity as our moon, which is probably very near the truth, the actual lustre of their surfaces under the sun's illuminating power is equal to one twenty-seventh of the lustre of the surface of the full moon; therefore it would naturally be much more difficult to see one of them through a cloud of given density than to see our moon. Now Mr. Todd, of Adelaide, Government Observer for South Australia, in response to a suggestion of Sir George Airy's, devoted special attention for many years to the movements of the satellites of Jupiter, timing them carefully as they entered on the planet's face, or passed off, or hid behind one side of Jupiter's disc, or reappeared on the other side. While engaged on such work, Mr. Todd has on four occasions seen a satellite of Jupiter when on the farther side of the planet, and so situated that, were the planet opaque to its very edge, the satellite would be just invisible, its unseen surface lying just inside (but touching, in the optical sense) the outer edge of the planet. On each occasion Mr. Todd's observation was confirmed by his assistant, nearly as skilful an observer as himself. The instrument employed was a fine eight-inch telescope by Cooke, of York. The circumstances were on each occasion most favourable for distinct vision—and in the singularly pure air of South Australia an eight-inch telescope, in good observing weather, would do better than a 12-inch or even a 15-inch telescope in our own hazy air.

Now it may be easily calculated that to see the whole disc of a globe 2,000 miles in diameter within the apparent outline of a globe 80,000 miles in diameter, the smaller being at the time on the farther side, the line of sight must pass (in order to reach the innermost edge of the smaller globe) through no less than 25,000 miles of the substance, whatever it may be, forming the outer part of the larger planet. A cloud-strewn region, then, we certainly have, since Mr. Todd and his assistant could not possibly look through 25,000 miles of solid matter. But moreover, the clouds must be strewn with exceeding tenuity. What sort of continuous cloud, for instance, can we imagine, through ten miles of which our own moon, twenty-seven times better lit than the satellites of Jupiter, could possibly be seen? The air we breathe at the earth's surface suffices, even when at its clearest, to cut off an appreciable amount of sunlight when the sun's rays have to traverse but a few hundred miles of it. Probably 20,000 miles of such air would barely let the sun's light through, and certainly such a range of air would hide the sun from view if the air were

not clearer than it is on an average summer's day with us in England.

The observation of a faint star through the outer parts of what looks like Jupiter's globe seems even more striking. Mr. Ellery, of Melbourne, Government Observer for Victoria, has witnessed this remarkable phenomenon. A star so faint as to be barely visible on the darkest and clearest night to ordinary eyesight, was occulted by Jupiter a few years ago, the passage of the planet over the star being visible only in southern latitudes. Mr. Ellery, armed with a telescope four feet in diameter (a reflector), watched the progress of Jupiter towards the star, expecting that the star would disappear the moment the planet's outline seemed to reach it. But to his surprise the star continued visible for several minutes, not finally disappearing until the line of sight to the star passed 800 miles below the apparent surface of the planet. The range of the line of sight in that case carried it along a distance within the planet of some 16,000 miles. What chance would an astronomer have of seeing a sixth-magnitude star, no matter what the power of the telescope he employed, through a cloud-stratum eight miles in thickness? Yet here a star was seen through a range of more than two hundred times that distance through cloud-strewn space!

But there is clear evidence that, however sharply defined the outlines of Jupiter and Saturn appear, they are of the thinnest conceivable cloud-texture. The outline of Jupiter has been observed by Schroter and others to be at times irregular—portions looking flattened, as though parts of the outer surface were chipped off. The outline of Saturn is often so distorted that it has assumed what has been called the square-shouldered aspect—a peculiarity of appearance which, as it has been observed by the Herschels, Airy, the Bonds, Coolidge, and other well-known observers, we cannot reject as simply the result of carelessness in observation, nor can any form of illusion serve to explain it. Jupiter has been seen with a satellite just entered on his disc, and a few minutes later the same satellite—although, had there been no change in Jupiter's apparent outline, it would have been farther on the planet's face—has been seen off the planet's disc, as though it had changed its mind and gone back. This cannot possibly be explained except by assuming that the outline of the planet is really formed of thinly strewn clouds to a depth of many thousands of miles, and that at times, over wide areas—many millions of square miles at a time it must be—the clouds which had formed the

apparent outline change from the form of visible cloud to that of the invisible vapour of water, so causing the apparent outline to shrink to layers lying far lower down. And lastly, the condition of the outer layers of Jupiter's apparent globe has been shown by the way in which the satellites, as they have advanced through the outskirts of the shadow of that globe, have been seen to wax and wane in lustre before finally disappearing.

We have other evidence, however, showing the partially sun-like condition of Jupiter. It is certain that a portion of the light which comes from the planet is inherent. We might fairly infer this from the vast superiority of the giant planet's light over that of Mars—for it is easy to calculate how much light we should get from Jupiter if his surface were of the same reflective quality—the same ‘whiteness,’ to use Zöllner's expression¹—as that of Mars; and we find that, when due account is taken of his much greater distance, Jupiter ought to be rather less brilliant than Mars when the latter is nearest both to the earth and to the sun (as in the autumn of 1877). But Mars is never half as bright as Jupiter. Still, although this would indicate a difference of surface, and therefore probably of condition, it would not of itself suffice to show that the light of Jupiter is inherent; for if the surface of Jupiter were of driven snow, or even of pure white clouds, he would send us more light than we actually receive from him, yet without possessing any inherent light. It is when we notice that large portions of his surface are by no means white, that we infer from the total amount of light we receive from him that he is partly self-luminous. In the case of Saturn we have the same kind of evidence.

But Jupiter's satellites have put this matter beyond a peradventure. They cast shadows, which—at least in the case of the nearer satellites—should appear as round black spots, if Jupiter has no inherent lustre. And so the shadows usually appear. Occasionally a tint of very dark purple has been suspected, but most observers, looking at the shadow of a satellite as seen in a good telescope, would regard the spot as absolutely black. The effect of contrast against the bright surface of the planet might make a really brown spot look black, but still, so far as one can judge from appearances, the shadow-spot looks ordinarily as black as a shadow thrown on an absolutely non-luminous body ought to appear. But we are able to correct this impression very effectually by observing the satellites themselves

¹ *Albedo* is the term he employs to indicate the reflective capacity of a surface.

when in transit across the planet's face. Near the edge of the disc they seem scarcely different in lustre from the planet itself, and sometimes they are quite lost when in that position. But when they pass well on to the disc they nearly always look much darker than the planet. On some parts of Jupiter's face they look actually black—that is, they appear as dark as a shadow. When, as often happens, the shadow lies close beside the disc of the satellite itself, it becomes easy to make exact comparison between the apparent tints of shadow and satellite. Under these circumstances, it has occasionally happened that the satellite has been found to be at least as dark as its own shadow—in one or two cases it has appeared even darker. Now a single case of this kind suffices to prove all that could be shown by a hundred such cases. When we see side by side two round surfaces, one of which we know to be the surface of a satellite (a body similar in surface-contour, no doubt, to our own moon), the other a part of Jupiter's surface which no sunlight can reach, and find that these two portions of surface show precisely the same degree of darkness, it becomes certain that from the region cast into shadow there comes as much light as from the sun-illumined surface of the satellite. This may be but about the thirtieth part of the apparent luminosity of the moon's surface (which is allowing the satellite of Jupiter a darker surface), but still it is something. Off the disc of Jupiter the satellites, one and all, look bright enough. Hence, we have it proved that *in some cases* as much light comes from Jupiter's surface, not as reflected sunlight, but on account of the inherent luminosity of that surface, as we get from the surface of a satellite reflecting sunlight to about one-thirtieth the amount reflected from our moon's surface. Now, that any inherent light should be found in any part of Jupiter's surface, there must be intense heat. This would be the case even if the surface we see were the actual surface of the planet; for we know that no kind of rock-surface glows with inherent light unless it is very hot. But when we remember that the surface we see is a surface of cloud, that the cloud masses form layers probably thousands of miles in depth, it is evident that for any inherent light to show through these clouds (which cannot themselves be luminous) there must be an immense amount of light coming from the planet's real surface, which therefore must be intensely hot. It would seem as though, were the outer envelope of clouds removed, and the planet within seen from some point of view such that no reflected

sunlight would come from him, he would be found to shine with considerable lustre of his own—probably akin to the kind of light which we get from the blood-red and garnet-tinted suns forming the fourth of Secchi's four orders of stars (as classified by their spectra).

We may pause for a moment to consider a point touched on, in passing, above. The satellites show much more nearly the same lustre as the surface of Jupiter's disc near the edge than near the middle. This, of course, shows that Jupiter's disc is darker near the edge. Yet it does not look so. On the contrary, it looks so much brighter to ordinary eyesight near the edge, that the French astronomer Chacornac was actually led to devise an ingenious theory in explanation of the supposed superiority of lustre there. I remember well how astonished was an astronomical friend of mine, who had spoken of this theory with approval, when I asked him to test the amount of the supposed increase of lustre near the edge, assuring him that he would find decrease instead of increase. He observed Jupiter with carefully graduated darkening glasses, and found, as I had predicted, that the edges disappeared first. But the lesson derivable from Chacornac's mistake—a mistake into which many observers of Jupiter have fallen—is worth careful study. We learn how apt we are to be deceived by mere contrast. Just as the satellites of Jupiter in transit appear sometimes black by contrast with the planet's bright surface, and the shadows black when in reality only dark, so the parts near the edge appear brighter than the rest of the disc because contrasted with the dark sky around, though in reality darker. The general lesson is to beware always lest false theories should be suggested by illusions of the sort. The particular lesson is that the parts of Jupiter near the edge are darker than the rest, and the interpretation is, I take it, that these parts are to some degree transparent—not always or often, scarcely ever, perhaps, so transparent as they must have been on those occasions when Mr. Todd saw a satellite or when Mr. Ellery saw a faint star, through thousands of miles of this star-strewn outer covering of Jupiter, but still always transparent enough to allow much sunlight to pass through, and so to look darker than the rest of the planet's surface, because not reflecting so much sunlight. But the falling off of lustre may very probably be in part also due to the circumstance that none of the planet's inherent light can come from the parts near the edge.

The great red spot on Jupiter, of which during the last few years we have heard so much, is perhaps the most sunlike feature of all. It had a surface of about 150,000,000 square miles—three-fourths of the entire surface of our earth. From that surface came a ruddy light, which gave clear evidence, under keen spectroscopic cross-examination by Dr. Henry Draper, of being in part inherent. The singularly regular shape of the spot—a perfect ellipse—showed that it was due to expansive action of vaporous matter encountering, but overcoming, the resistance of the vaporous atmosphere around the region occupied by the spot. The only way, I believe, in which the form and colour and persistence of this great spot can be explained satisfactorily is by a theory akin to that suggested in my article on Sun-spots. It would seem that from deep down below the layers of cloud which, until 1876, had covered the region occupied afterwards by the spot, mighty masses of compressed vapour were flung upwards with intense energy, making their way through those layers of cloud, and rolling the clouds away on all sides till an enormous area was cleared. Through the region thus cleared of cloud we could see the ruddy light from the glowing surface within. So long as the forces at work below drove the clouds away from this region, the spot remained, retaining alike its colour and its singularly regular form. This lasted *for more than five years*, after which, though the spot did not disappear, yet it lost its lustre, while the irregularity of its shape showed that the vaporous masses flung up from below were no longer able to drive away, as before, the cloud-masses which were endeavouring (so to speak) to return to the region from which they had been driven.

The existence of disturbances such as this, so widespread, so long lasting, and giving evidence of such intense heat in the planet, must assuredly suffice to dispose of the belief that Jupiter is a world like our own, and to prove that, though not actually a sun, his condition is more nearly akin to the sun's than to that of our own earth. And what is thus proved of Jupiter is proved also of his brother giant Saturn, seeing that all the evidence shows Saturn and Jupiter to be in nearly the same stage of planetary life, Saturn, if anything, being the younger and more sunlike of the two.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

Requiem.

FOR me no dirges musical,
No brass on the cathedral wall.
All things are your memorial.

The wind upthrobbing from the shore
Is like your footstep on the floor,
Is like your hand upon the door.

A silent presence ever near,
Round books your fingers touched last year,
A subtle, ghostly atmosphere.

Your organ studies, strange they look !
The lesson marked you never took,
Your writing in my birthday book.

All tokens dumb, importunate,
All lifeless things that seem to wait
For your returning. Ah, how late !

And now in Memory's Hades grey,
Where life and death join hands alway,
I watch with you, by night, by day.

Even as I stand, I pledge my faith,
I trust you while I draw my breath,
I trust you in the gates of death.

Beyond ? Where shall our meeting be ?
Two breakers on a soundless sea,
God's pity, love, on you and me !

M. KENDALL.

Sir Jocelyn's Cap.

V.

JOCELYN reserved his final trial of his power for Wednesday evening. Meanwhile, he thought he would let the Cap rest. But one thing happened, which troubled him greatly. His housekeeper's daughter,—she was a girl of fourteen or so, all knuckles and elbows—brought up his breakfast crying.

‘What is the matter?’ he asked.

‘Please, Sir Jocelyn, mother’s had a terrible loss.’

‘What has she lost?’

‘She’s lost her purse, Sir Jocelyn, sir, with three pound fourteen and ninepence-farthing in it. I don’t know what we *shall* do. And I’ve lost my lucky sixpence. And Bobby, he’s lost his ha’penny.’

Jocelyn turned crimson with wrath and shame. His housekeeper’s purse! The girl’s lucky sixpence! And the child’s half-penny! His Jinn had placed them all in his pocket!

‘I am very sorry,’ he stammered. ‘As for the purse, I can’t restore—I mean—find that for you. But—have you looked everywhere?’

‘Oh, everywhere, sir.’

‘Look here, Eliza. Here are four pounds,’—he would have handed over the exact sum, but he remembered in time that the lucky sixpence was among the coins in his pocket, and would certainly be identified,—‘here are four sovereigns. Tell your mother to buy herself a new purse, and if she loses her money again, I shall not find it for her. Turn your lucky sixpence into a shilling, and Bobby’s halfpenny into a sixpence.’

When she was gone he pulled out the Cap, and set it before him on the table. ‘You are a common Thief,’ he said, shaking his forefinger. ‘You are so lazy that, when I ask for money, you go to the housekeeper’s room and steal—steal her purse. You are a disgraceful sneak and thief. Another such action, and I will—’ here he remembered that he wanted the services of the Cap for Wednesday, and said no more. But he was profoundly disgusted.

If money could only be had by stealing, how could he accept any money at all? Then he reflected. There is so much money and no more in the world. All this money has owners. The owners do not part with their money except as pay for services done. How, then, can money be got by any servants of a Wishing Cap except by stealing it? But to steal a poor housekeeper's money! Mean!—mean! Yet for a Baronet to accept money stolen from anybody! Impossible. And so vanished at one blow his income of 13,477*l.* 8*s.* 10*½d.* The matter opened a large field for inquiry which he 'argued out' as before. That is to say, he got hopelessly fogged over it.

This matter caused him a good deal of annoyance. There were other things too, which made him suspect the power, or the intelligence, of the Cap. Thus, it was vexatious, when he had merely wished, as so many well-meaning people do sometimes wish, that he was able to send to certain cases of distress, coals or help in other ways, to be told by the housekeeper that the ton of coals he had ordered was come, 'and please, here is the bill.' He paid it silently. Again, he was in his dressing-room, thinking of Nelly Staunton. 'The case is as hopeless,' he said to himself, 'as if seas divided us. I wish,' he added gloomily, 'seas did divide us.' Was it by accident, or was it by the meddlesome and mistaken action of the Cap—he always called it the Cap to avoid the somewhat invidious phrase, Slave, or Demon of the Cap,—that at this moment he kicked over the pail containing his bath water, and made, of course, a great and horrible pool? He sat down and considered. As for the ton of coals, he had ordered them: but then they came at the very moment when he was wishing that he *had* coals to send. He had himself kicked over the pail; but then, could it have been zeal on the part of the Cap to carry out, however imperfectly, even impossible orders?

On the Monday evening he met a lot of people who had all at some time or other gone in for spiritualistic business. This was indeed their bond of union. After dinner a good many wonderful stories were told, and there was talk about Volition, Magnetism, Clairvoyance, and the like.

'I am sometimes interested,' said a lady who was present, one of those who believe everything, 'in the old stories about Slaves of the Lamp, the Ring, or the Jewel. They seem to me illustrative of the supreme power which the Will of man has been known to achieve in rare cases; that, namely, when he can command even senseless matter and make it obey him.'

'As, for instance,' said Jocelyn, waking up, for this seemed likely to interest him, 'if I was to order this glass to be upset. Pardon me, but I did not ask Mr. Andersen to upset it.'

Yet it was upset. Mr. Andersen, one of the guests, had at that moment knocked it over.

'That, certainly,' observed the lady, 'would be an exercise of Will of a very singular and remarkable kind. It belongs to the class of phenomena which the Orientals accounted for by the invention of their so-called Slaves. Solomon had such slaves. Mohammed had them. Every great man had them.'

'Do you think,' asked Jocelyn anxiously, 'that they exist now?'

'The slaves? Certainly not.' This lady, it is evident, knew a great deal. 'But the power—yes—oh yes!—that exists if we can attain to it.' She was a woman about thirty years of age, with large full eyes. 'If I choose to exercise my Will, Sir Jocelyn, you will advance towards me whether you like it or not.'

'I very much doubt that; but,' said Jocelyn recklessly, 'if I choose to exercise my Will, you shall recede from me.'

'Really!' said the lady scornfully; 'we will try if you please. My Will against your Will. You shall advance, but I will not recede.'

No one had ever before suspected young Sir Jocelyn of any pretence at supernatural powers, so that they all laughed and expected instant discomfiture. Yet a remarkable thing happened. The lady sat in a chair before him, and Jocelyn fixed his eyes upon hers, which met his with a dilated glare. He did not advance, but presently the lady's chair began to move backward, very slowly. She sprang up with a shriek of affright, and the chair fell over.

'What have you done?' she cried. 'Some one was pulling the chair.'

'Very clever indeed,' observed a man who was addicted to feats of legerdemain and deception. 'Very clever, Sir Jocelyn; you have deceived even me. But you will not do it twice, otherwise I shall find out how you did it.'

'No,' he replied, half ashamed, 'not twice. A trick,' he added, 'ought not to be done over again.'

'A trick?' said the lady. 'But no—that was no trick. If the chair were not actually pulled, why you must have the power, Sir Jocelyn. Yes: you have the Will that causes even inanimate matter to move. It was not me but the chair that you repelled.'

He deprecated, modestly, the possession of so strong a Will. The story, however, without the names, has been preserved, and may be read among the papers of the Psychical Society. It is one

of their choicest and best authenticated anecdotes. But the real simple truth is not known to them, and in revealing it one does but set the narrative, so to speak, upon a different platform. It is no longer a mysterious Will but a mysterious Agent.

'It is a long time,' observed the Mr. Andersen, who had upset the glass—he was a bright and sprightly Americanised Dane—'it is a long time since I occupied myself with the secrets and mysteries of the unseen world, but if you please I will give you an account of the final result at which I arrived.'

'You did get a result, then,' said the lady of the strong Will.

'You shall hear. I was out camping one night; all the fellows had gone to sleep except me, and I was keeping watch by the camp-fire with my six-shooter and the big dog for company. The sky above us was as clear and pure as a young maiden's heart, and the tall trees stood up against the sky like sentinels, dark and steadfast, and the whole air was as still—as still as a fellow keeps when he wants to see if the other fellow will copper a queen or not. But I fell to thinking and thinking: and there was some one far away that I wanted so much to see and to know what . . . that person—might be thinking and doing —'

'And you saw her!' cried the lady.

'I remembered,' he went on, not regarding the interruption, 'how the fellow who taught us the mesmeric passes told me what an ever so strong mesmeric power I possessed, and I thought that here, if ever, was a high old time to try that power. I looked round at the still sky, and the quiet trees, and the sleeping fellows, and I just began to wish. Then the big dog lifted up his head and made as though he'd like to give a howl, and looked at my face, and it seemed as if he believed he'd best swallow that howl. The more he didn't howl the more I wished: and I wished and I wished and I wished till it seemed as if the whole world was standing still to judge how wonderful I was wishing, and then there came a faint rustle way off among the tops of the trees, and I thought there was something, may be, beginning to come out of it all. And I wished and I wished and I wished. And . . .' here he paused in a manner which thrilled his hearers.

'Well?' asked Jocelyn, giving voice to the general expectation.

'And, by Jupiter, Sir Jocelyn,' said the narrator, nothing never came of it.'

VI.

BEFORE going to the ball at Lady Hambledon's, Jocelyn took the most careful precautions to prevent any possible mistake. He put the Cap before him and lectured it solemnly.

'Now, you understand, there is to be no fooling this evening. I am going to Lady Hambledon's—don't confound her with any other Hambledon—Lady Hambledon in Brook Street; the Stauntons are going to be there: you will arrange an opportunity for me to speak to—the young lady; you will do your best to—to stimulate—to give me a shove if I get stuck; you will also, if that is possible, predispose the young lady in my favour. I don't think there is anything more you can do. See that, this evening at least, you make no blunders. Remember the housekeeper's purse.' By this time he had learned to avoid the phrase 'I wish' as most dangerous and misleading, when a servant of limited intellect interprets every wish literally.

He went off, however, comforted with the conviction that really he had said all that was necessary to say. If this Cap, or the Slave of the Cap, was not a fool and an imbecile, his orders would be executed to the letter. He was a little excited, of course; anybody would have been so under the circumstances. Not only was his happiness at stake—at five-and-twenty one's whole future happiness is very often at stake—but he was about to test and prove the powers of the Cap. Hitherto that power had not been exercised to his advantage in any way. He should now ascertain exactly whether he was going to be a real wizard, or quite a common person like other young Baronets. On the stairs he overheard a whispered conversation which made him feel uneasy.

'I saw the Stauntons go up just now,' said one.

'And I saw Annesley go up just before them,' said another. 'Everybody says that he is hard hit. Came here after her, of course.'

Nothing absolutely to connect Annesley with Nelly. Yet he was uneasy. Certainly, Annesley would not be hard hit by Caroline. Two people full of ideas cannot marry and be happy. No, it must be Nelly. He fortified himself with the thought of his Cap, and went on upstairs.

The first thing he saw was Nelly herself, dancing with Annesley. 'Confound him!' said Jocelyn. 'He is as graceful as an ostrich!' On the other side of the room sat Mrs. Staunton. To her he made his way, and reached her just at the moment when

Caroline was brought back to the same spot by her partner in the last dance. He could do nothing less than ask Caroline for the valse which had just begun. She was disengaged.

At this juncture there fell upon him the strangest feeling possible. It was exactly as if he was being guided. He felt as if some one were leading him, and he seemed to hear a whisper saying, ‘Everything is arranged according to your Excellency’s commands.’ The consciousness of supernatural presence in a London ball-room is a very strange thing. There is an incongruity in it; it makes one act and feel as if in a dream. It was in a waking dream that Jocelyn performed that dance. Presently—he was not in the least surprised now, whatever should happen—he found himself sitting in the conservatory with Caroline. She was discoursing in a broad philosophical spirit on the futility of human hopes and opportunities.

Then he heard his own voice asking her ‘What is the use of opportunities unless one knows how to use them?’

‘What indeed?’ replied Caroline; ‘but surely, Sir Jocelyn, it is only the weaker sort to whom that happens? The strong—here she directed an encouraging glance at him—“can always use, and can even make, if need be, their opportunities.”

‘Yes:’ Jocelyn forced the conversation a step lower; ‘but if a girl won’t give a fellow a chance.’

‘I think,’ said Caroline, ‘that any man can find his chance, if he likes to seize it.’

There was a pause—Jocelyn felt himself impelled to speak. It was as if some one was pushing him towards a precipice. When he afterwards thought of himself and his extraordinary behaviour at this moment, he could only account for it by the theory that he was compelled to speak and to conduct himself in this wonderful way. ‘You must have seen,’ he whispered, ‘you must have seen all this time, that I have been hoping for a chance, and was unable to get one. There was always your mother or your sister in the way. And I did hope—I mean—I did think that the Cap—I mean that I did rather fancy that one might perhaps get a chance here, though it isn’t exactly what I ordered and wished. But I can’t help it. In fact I made up my mind last Sunday that it must be to-night or never. But what with the crush, and seeing other fellows cut in—Annesley and the others—’

Caroline interrupted this incoherent speech, which, however, could have but one meaning. ‘This is not the only place or the only time in the world.’

'Well,' said Jocelyn, 'may I call to-morrow? But then—oh! this isn't what I wanted—may I call—' his eyes wandered, and he began a kind of love-babble, yet with a look of bewilderment.

Caroline listened calmly. She remembered another love-scene years before, when much the same kind of thing was said to her, though her lover then had a far different expression in his eyes. They were hungry eyes, and terrified her. Jocelyn's were bewildered eyes, and made her feel just a little contemptuous. Even the coldest women like some fierceness in their wooer.

'Hush!' she said, 'you will be overheard. Take me now back to mamma. We are going immediately. You may come to-morrow at five.'

He pressed her hand, and took her back. Nelly was with her mother, Annesley in attendance. She glanced at her sister, and caught in reply a smile so full of meaning, that she did not hesitate to bestow a look upon Jocelyn of the sweetest sympathy. Her pretty eyes and this sympathetic look of sisterly—yes! sisterly—pleasure, completed the business. It wanted nothing but Nelly's sympathy to round off the situation and fill up his cup of misery.

Then they went away. Jocelyn retired to a comparatively secluded place on the landing, and there, leaning against a door, he began to curse his fate and his folly. He was so absorbed in railing at fortune and in self-pity, that he absolutely forgot the very existence of the Cap. The situation was too desperate; in a lesser stress of circumstances he would have remembered it; but as yet he did not even connect the Cap with the present fearful disaster, of which the worst was that it could not possibly be worse; it was hopeless; he had told a girl to whom he was utterly indifferent, that he was in love with her; without being drunk, or blinded for a space by her charms, he had addressed words to her which he had intended for her sister. 'Oh,' he groaned, 'I wish I were somehow, anyhow, out of this horrible situation!'

As he spoke, he involuntarily straightened his legs and leaned back with a jerk. The door opened, and he fell back with a fearful crash of broken glass upon the back stairs and a tray of ices on the way to the tea-room.

Unlucky Jocelyn! To fall down stairs backwards is at best undignified, but who can describe the indignity and discomfort of falling in such circumstances as this? He was helped to his feet by some of the servants, and slipped away as quickly as he could.

The cool night air restored him a little; he found himself able

to think coherently ; and he now understood that the whole of this miserable evening's work was due to his infernal Cap.

He took it out of the cabinet as soon as he reached his chambers. ‘ You fool ! you beast ! you blind, blundering block-head ! ’ he thus addressed the Cap. ‘ It is all your doing. The wrong girl ? Yes : of course it was the wrong girl. Didn’t give you her name ? You ought to have known it. Girl you talked so long with ? ’—All this time he seemed to be hearing and answering excuses. ‘ Talked so long with— ’ He sank in a chair and groaned. Alas ! it was his own fault ; he had forgotten to name the girl ; the Slave of the Cap knew that he wanted one of the Stauntons, and supposed that he wanted the one with whom he had conversed so much on Sunday. How should he know ?

He mixed a glass of whisky and seltzer.

‘ I wish,’ he said, desperately, ‘ that the stuff would poison me.’

He drank off half the tumbler. Heavens ! it was methylated spirit that he had poured into the glass. His wish was very nearly gratified. Fortunately the quantity he had drunk proved the cause of his safety. Over the bad quarter of an hour which followed let us drop the veil of pity.

But he was to have another and as rude a lesson in the activity of his slave. He awoke in the middle of the night, with a sort of nightmare, in which Caroline was lecturing him and saying, ‘ I am to be your companion all your life. You will never cease listening to the voice of instruction.’ The weight of his horrible blunder became intolerable to him. He threw off the clothes and sat up in the bed. ‘ I wish,’ he gasped, ‘ I wish I was dead.’ Something seized him by the throat. He could not breathe. He sprang from the bed and rushed to the window for air. He was choking. He battled with the fit, or whatever it was, which held him for three or four minutes and left him purple in the face and trembling in the limbs.

‘ It is spasmodic asthma,’ he said, when he had recovered a little. ‘ My father had it, and his father had it. I knew it would come some day.’ At the same time, it was odd that it should come just when he was wishing to be dead. And the constriction of the pipes did seem astonishingly like the fingers of some one trying to throttle him.

VII.

'DEAR SIR JOCELYN'—it was a note from Mrs. Staunton—'I shall be very glad to see you to-day at twelve. Caroline tells me you have something *important*—may I guess what it is?—to say to me.—Yours very sincerely, JULIA STAUNTON.'

Jocelyn received this note with the cup of tea which he took in bed according to vicious morning usage. He read it and groaned. It meant, this harmless note, nothing short of a life-long lecture from a female philosopher, and he a perfectly frivolous young man!

He fell back upon his pillow and groaned. Then he foolishly began to wish, forgetting his Cap. 'I wish the confounded letter could be washed out of existence,' he said, and with an impatient gesture threw out his arms and upset the cup of tea over the sheet. It would take ten minutes to get another. 'It's that accursed Cap,' he said. 'It always takes one up wrong. I've a good mind to burn it.' He dressed himself in the vilest temper. Had he heard the conversation at that moment going on between Caroline and her mother, he would have been more angry still.

'I do not pretend,' said the young lady, 'to feel any violent attachment for him. That kind of thing is over for me. There was a time, as you know—'

'My dear,' said her mother, 'that is so long ago, and you were so very young, and it was before your uncle died.'

'Yes, it is so long ago,' said Caroline; 'I am seven-and-twenty now, two years older than Jocelyn. Poor boy! he is weak, but I think I shall have a docile husband; unless, to be sure, he turns stubborn, as weak men sometimes do. In that case——' Her face hardened, and her mother felt that if Caroline's husband should prove stubborn, there would be a game of 'Pull devil, pull baker.'

There was, Jocelyn felt, no way out of it at all, unless the way of flight which is always open to everybody. And then, what a tremendous fool he would seem! As for the truth, it could not possibly be told. That, at any rate, must be concealed, and at this point he began to understand some of the inconveniences, besides that of being misunderstood, in keeping a private demon. It is not, nowadays, that you would be burned if it were found out. Quite the contrary: all the clergymen in the world would be delighted at finding an argument so irrefragable against atheists and rationalists. The thing was wrong, of course, but beautifully oppor-

tune. But it would be so supremely ridiculous. A Slave of the Cap, Jinn, or Afreet, who could only find his master money by stealing the housekeeper's purse ; who interpreted a wish, without the least regard to consequences, literally and blindly ; who led his master into the most ridiculous scrapes, even to getting him engaged to the wrong girl : a blundering stupid slave—this, if you please, would be simply ridiculous. As for Nelly, his chance with her was hopelessly gone, even if, by any accident, he could break off with her sister. Yet, he thought, he should like to know if there was any truth in the report about her and Annesley. ‘I wish,’ he said, ‘I wish, now, that I had never known her.’

Then it became apparent to him that he really never had known her at all. She could not suspect his intentions because she had no opportunity of guessing them : and he remembered that though he had known the Stauntons a good while he had never once got an opportunity of talking with her alone, except at a dance, and then her card was always filled up for the whole time she stayed. Sympathetic eyes are very sweet, but they do not mean an understanding without being told that a man is in love with one. To do Nelly justice, she had never thought of Jocelyn in this way. He was an agreeable young man to dance with : he came to afternoon tea and talked with Caroline, or rather listened : she thought he was not very clever, but he seemed nice.

Mrs. Staunton received Jocelyn with great cordiality. ‘Let me,’ she said, ‘hear at once, my dear Jocelyn, what you wish to say to me.’ It was a sign of the very worst that she addressed him by his Christian name, without the handle, for the first time.

‘Caroline has told me, that, last night——’

‘Yes,’ said Jocelyn. ‘I wish she hadn’t.’ The last words *sotto voce*.

‘She did not tell me all,’ replied Mrs. Staunton. ‘In fact very little, but I gathered——’

‘I told her,’ said Jocelyn in a tone most melancholy and even sepulchral, ‘I told her that I loved her.’

‘Yes—I gathered so much—and, indeed, I was not surprised. To love my Caroline betrays, as well as becomes, a liberal education. Yet I need not disguise from you, Jocelyn,’ the young lady’s mamma continued, ‘that from one point of view—the only one, I am bound to confess—the match is undesirable. You are of ancient family ; you have rank : you have, I am assured, excellent morals and the best principles: but, my dear boy, you have, pardon me for reminding you of it, so scanty a fortune.’

'It is true,' Jocelyn said briskly, and plucking up a little hope: 'and if you think that obstacle insurmountable—if, I say, Mrs. Staunton, that fact stands in the way—I will at once withdraw.' He half rose as if to withdraw at once.

'It would have been insurmountable in Nelly's case,' said Mrs. Staunton, 'because my poor Nelly will have but a slender portion. With Caroline the case is different. The dear girl is provided for by her uncle's bequest, and though you will not be really rich, there will be enough. No, Jocelyn, the objection is not insurmountable, but I feel it my duty to state its existence and its nature. I want you to understand entirely my feelings. And, in fact, my dear Jocelyn,' she gave him her hand, which he pressed, but languidly, 'you have my full permission to go on with your suit and my very best wishes for your success, because I think, nay, I am sure, that you already appreciate Caroline at her true value and will make her happiness your only study.' Jocelyn murmured something.

'It is not often that two sisters get engaged on the same day,' Mrs. Staunton continued, smiling. 'Yet it will please you to hear that I have this morning already consented to Nelly's engagement with Mr. Annesley.'

'With Annesley?' It was true, then. All was indeed over now. Yes: when one is already hopelessly crushed, one more wheel may go over without materially increasing the agony.

'We have not known him long, but he bears, so far as we can learn, as good a character as one can desire. He is an intimate friend of your own, Jocelyn, is he not?'

'He is,' said Jocelyn gloomily. 'He nearly poisoned me last Saturday.'

'That is indeed a proof of sincere friendship,' the lady replied, laughing. 'He and Nelly have been attached to each other, it seems, for some time, though the foolish couple said nothing to me about it: and at last— Well, I hope they will be happy. In addition to other advantages he has a large private income.'

'He has, I believe, about four thousand a year. Frillings did it, in Coventry.'

'Ye—yes—so many of our best families have made their fortune in trade. We must not think too much of these things. And he certainly has as good a manner as one would expect in an Earl.' Then a smile, doubtless at the thought of the four thousand a year, stole over her motherly face. 'It is, certainly, pleasant to think that the dear girl will have everything that a reasonable person can desire. His principles, too, are excellent. And he is, I am assured, a remarkably clever man.'

Jocelyn said nothing. He had, in fact, nothing to say, except that all young men with four thousand a year are believed to possess excellent principles.

'And now,' she said, 'you may go to Caroline. My dear boy, why, why did not your uncle, or your father, make money in frillings at Coventry?'

He went to Caroline. But it was with creeping feet, as a schoolboy goes to school, and with hanging head, as that boy goes on his way to certain punishment.

'What on earth am I to say to her?' he thought. 'Am I to kiss her? Will she expect me to kiss her? Hang it! I don't want to kiss her. I wish I could kiss Nelly instead.'

Just then Nelly herself ran out. 'Oh! Jocelyn,' she said, 'you have seen mamma. Of course it is all right. I am so glad. You are going to Caroline—poor Caroline! You are going to be my brother. I am so glad, and I am so happy—we are all so happy—did mamma tell you about me as well? Wish me joy, brother Jocelyn.'

'My dear Nelly,' he said, with a little sob in his voice, 'I suppose I may call you Nelly, now, and my dear Nelly as well. I sincerely wish you all the joy that the world has to give.'

She put up her face and smiled. He stooped and kissed her forehead.

'Be happy, sister Nelly,' he whispered, and left her.

Nelly wondered why there was a tear in his eye. Her own lover certainly had not shed one tear since he first came a courting: but then men are different.

Caroline was calmly expecting her wooer. She half rose when he opened the door, and her cheek flushed. She wished the business over.

'Caroline,' he said. But he could say no more. His voice and his speech failed him.

'Jocelyn,' she replied. And then, because in another moment the situation would have become strained—and, besides, he was a gentleman and would not give her pain—and, again, if there was any mistake, it was his own folly that had done it—he took both her hands and drew her gently towards him and kissed her lips, without another word of love or of protestation.

Then he sat beside her, keeping her hand in his, and she began to talk of marriage and its duties, especially the duty of the husband, from a lofty philosophical point of view. It was agreed that she was to have absolute freedom: to take up any opinion: to advocate any cause, that she pleased—at that moment, because she varied a good deal, she was thinking what a splendid field was

open to any one, especially any woman, who would preach Buddhism and the Great Renunciation. She made no allusion at all to her fortune, but Jocelyn perfectly understood that she meant to manage her house in her own way. As for himself she designed, she said, a career for him. Of course, he would give up the F. O. And so on. He mildly acquiesced in everything. His own slave had landed him in a slavery worse than anything ever imagined or described. He was to spend his life under the rule of a strong-minded woman of advanced opinions.

VIII.

Then followed two or three weeks of which Jocelyn thinks now, with a kind of wondering horror. He was expected to be continually in attendance. He was expected to listen diligently. He was even expected to read a great many books, lists of which were prepared for him. Everything, he clearly perceived, was to be arranged for him. Very well: nothing mattered now. Let things go on in their own way.

The worst of all was the abominably selfish rapture with which Annesley, of whom he now, very naturally, saw a great deal, treated him. The man could talk of nothing but the perfections of Nelly. As poor Jocelyn knew these perfections, and had every opportunity of studying them daily, the words of the accepted suitor went into his heart like a knife. Yet he could not object to listen, or contradict his friend, or show any weariness. To be sure he might have conversed about Caroline, but it seemed ridiculous. Everybody knew that she was regularly and faultlessly beautiful; everybody also knew that she was strong-minded and held all kinds of views. Besides, he could not trust himself to speak of her. It was bad enough every day to speak with her.

The two weddings were to take place on the same day, which was already fixed for the first week in July. It was arranged where the brides should spend their honeymoon—Caroline and Jocelyn in Germany; Nelly with her bridegroom at the Lakes. Meantime it was impossible not to perceive that Jocelyn, who ought to have been dancing, singing, and laughing, grew daily more silent and melancholy. Caroline, however, either did not or would not see this. Nelly, who did, wondered what it meant, and even taxed Jocelyn with the thing.

‘What does it mean?’ she said. ‘You get your heart’s desire, and then you hang your head and sit mum. Why I haven’t heard

you laugh once since your engagement, and as for your smile, you smile as if you were going to have a tooth out.'

'Nonsense!' said Jocelyn. 'I suppose men are always quiet when they are most happy.'

'Then Jack'—this was Annesley—'must be miserable indeed, for he is always laughing and singing and making a noise. Come, Jocelyn, tell me all about it. Are you in debt?'

'No.'

'Are you—have you—' she blushed but insisted, 'have you got any kind of previous engagement? Oh! I know young men sometimes entangle themselves foolishly,—what a wise Nelly!—and then have trouble in breaking off.'

'It isn't that, Nelly. It really is nothing.'

'Then laugh and hold up your head. Or I will pinch you, I will indeed. You are going to marry Caroline, who is the most beautiful girl in London and the cleverest, and you go about as if you wanted to sit in a corner and cry.'

Jocelyn obeyed her and laughed, as cheerfully as a starving clown. When he went home, however, it was with a stern resolve. He would have it out with the Cap.

In taking it out of the cabinet, however, he took with it his uncle's letter and read it again. The latter part he read with new understanding: 'moderation: 'failure to comprehend: 'want of obedience: 'yes—there was something wrong with this Slave of the Cap. As for the Cap itself, it looked surprisingly shabby; far worse than it had appeared when he first got possession of it.

'Now,' he said—the time was midnight, and he was alone in his chamber—'let us understand this.' He took the Cap in his hand. 'If you can appear to me, Slave or Demon, show yourself to me and answer for your blunders if you can.'

The same sensation of faintness which he had before experienced came over him again. When he opened his eyes, he saw before him the same vision of a tottering, battered old creature, with fiery bright eyes.

'I have done my best, Excellency,' said the Slave of the Cap, in a tremulous quavering pipe.

'Your best! You have done everything that is stupid, blundering, and feeble. What does it mean? What the devil, I say, does it mean?'

'I beg your Excellency's pardon. If you had mentioned which young lady—'

'Jinn! You knocked me head-over-heels down the back stairs.'

'It was the *only* way out of it. You wished to be out of it.'

'Slave of the Ox Goad of Religion! You stole the house-keeper's money.'

'I have always stolen money for your Excellency's ancestors. You cannot have other people's money without stealing it. This was the nearest' money, and I was anxious not to keep your Excellency waiting.'

'You have covered me with disappointment and shame.'

'I am old, sir. The Cap is falling to pieces. I have slaved for it for five hundred years. After five hundred years of work no Cap is at his best.' He looked, indeed, at his very worst, so feeble and tottering was he. 'In love matters,' he went on, 'I am still, however, excellent, as the late Sir Jocelyn always found me. Up to the very last I managed all his affairs for him. If I can do anything for your Excellency now—'

'You have already done enough for me. Stay—a thought struck Jocelyn. 'You would like your liberty.'

'Surely, sir.'

'You shall have it. I will throw this Cap into the fire—understand that!—on one condition: it is that you undo what you have already done. It is by your blundering and stupidity that I have become engaged to Caroline Staunton. Get me out of the engagement. But mind, nothing dishonourable: nothing that will affect my reputation, or hers: the thing must be broken off by her, for some good reason of her own, and one which will do neither of us any harm. For my own part, I don't in the least understand how it is to be done. That is your look-out.'

'Excellency, it shall be done. It shall be done immediately.'

He vanished, and Jocelyn replaced the Cap in the cabinet. It was with anxious heart that he lay down to sleep, nor did sleep come readily. He was quite sure, now, that the engagement would be broken off somehow, but he could not possibly understand how or why. There had been between them no quarrel nor the slightest disagreement: in fact, Jocelyn always agreed to everything: there was nothing, on either side, that was not perfectly well known; nothing, that is, as sometimes happens with young men, which might 'come out and have to be explained.' How—But, after all, it was the business of his servant to find out the way. He went asleep.

In the afternoon, next day, a note came to him at the Foreign Office. It was from Caroline, begging him to call upon her as soon as possible.

'I have,' she said, 'a very important communication to make to you—a confession—an apology if you please. Pray come to me.'

He received this strange note with a feeling of the greatest relief. He knew that she was going to release him. Why or with what excuse he neither knew nor cared.

Caroline was in her own room, her study. She gave him her hand with some constraint, and when he would have kissed her, she refused. 'No, Jocelyn,' she said, 'that is all over.'

'But,—Caroline—why?' A smile of ineffable satisfaction stole over his face which she did not see. He would have been delighted to fall on his knees in order to show the depth of his gratitude. But he refrained and composed himself. At all events he would play the lover to the end, as he had begun. It was due, in fact, to the lady as well as to himself.

'Jocelyn,' she said frankly, yet with some confusion in her eyes, 'I have made a great mistake. Listen a moment, and forgive me if you can. It is now eight years since a certain man fell in love with me—and I with him. My poor boy—I have never felt—I know it, now—towards you as I did towards him. We could not marry because neither of us had any money. And then he went abroad. But he has come back—and—and—I have money now, if he has not—and—oh! Jocelyn—do you understand, now?'

'You have met him'—oh! rare and excellent Slave!—'You have met him, Caroline, and you love each other still.' He wanted to dance and jump, but he did not: he spoke slowly with a face of extraordinary gravity.

'Oh! Jocelyn.' Could this be the same Caroline? Why, she was soft-eyed and tearful, her cheeks were glowing, and her lips trembled. 'Oh! Jocelyn. Can you forgive me? You loved me, too, poor boy, because you thought me, perhaps, better and wiser than many other women. Better, you see, I am not, though I may be wiser than some.'

He gave her his hand.

'Caroline,' he said heroically, 'what does it matter for me, if only you are happy?'

'Then you do forgive me, Jocelyn? I cannot bear to think that you will break your heart over this—that I am the cause—'

'Forgive you? Caroline, you are much too good for me. I should never have made you happy. As for me,' he gulped a joyful laugh and choked, 'as for me, do not think of me. I shall—in time—perhaps. . . Meantime, Caroline, we remain friends.'

'Yes—always friends—yes,' she replied hurriedly. Then she burst into tears. 'I did not know, Jocelyn. I did not know. I thought I had forgotten him—indeed I did.'

He lifted her hand and kissed it with reverence. Then he left her, went to the Club, and had a pint of champagne to pull himself together. As for what people said, when it became known, that mattered nothing, because, whatever they said, they did not say openly to him.

It may be mentioned that no alteration was made in the date of the double wedding: only that one of the bridegrooms was changed. It was a beautiful wedding, and nobody noticed Sir Jocelyn who was up in the gallery, his countenance wreathed with smiles.

When he left Caroline, Jocelyn went back to his chambers and prepared a little ceremony. He first lit the fire, then he took out the Cap and wrapped it in his uncle's letter: then he solemnly placed both Cap and letter in the flames.

'You are free, my friend,' he said. 'An old Cap and an old Slave are more trouble than they are worth. Perhaps, now that the Cap is burned, you will recover your youth.'

There was no answer or any sign. And now nothing remains to Jocelyn of the family heirloom, except the picture of Sir Jocelyn de Haultegresse and Ali Ibn Yussûf, otherwise called Khanjar ed Dîn, or the Ox Goad of Religion.

Servants Old and New.

MR. RUSKIN justly characterises as one of the finest passages in fiction, for delicacy, pathos, and deep feeling, the return of Henry Morton to his uncle's house.

After a most pathetic interview between Ailie Wilson and Henry, told as only Sir Walter could tell it, the old housekeeper bestows upon her late master's nephew the whole of the property left to her by Milnwood, but, with a true old servant's pride in household concerns, begs him first to visit the oak parlour.

' How grandly it's keepit, just as if ye had been expected home every day ! I loot naebody sort it but my ain hands. It was a kind of advertisement to me, though whilst the tear wan into my ee, and I said to myself, What needs I fash wi' grates, and carpets, and cushions, and the muckle brass candlesticks ony mair ? for they'll ne'er come home that aught it rightfully.'

Henry, we are told, is overcome by so much generosity from one whom he had always regarded as sordidly parsimonious and niggardly in small things.

There are no characters that are greater masterpieces of artistic excellence than the portraits that Sir Walter has drawn of old servants. He thoroughly understood natures that were at once simple, ignorant, and faithful, and could paint with lifelike veracity the *naïve* craftiness which, whilst binding itself to unlimited loyalty to one person, remained callous to the feelings of others, or even indifferent to the dictates of common honesty, as shown in Caleb Balderstone. It is about an old and valued servant, who lived long in the service of a relation's family, in whom were found all the love and fidelity of Rose Flammock, all the self-sacrifice of Cuddie Headrigg, and all the zeal and pride of Jenny Dennison, joined to an incorruptible honesty, that I am desirous of writing a short account.

Mary Maria Whitaker was born in the year 1800. She was one of a large family. Her father was a stonemason, whilst his wife brought up his children in habits of the strictest thrift and economy.

'I can never remember the time when I could not knit,' she has often said to me; 'and when I got old enough I had to mind the baby, wash and dress my younger brothers and sisters, mend their linen, and keep them from getting into mischief. At ten years old my mother taught me how to make the beds, to bake a loaf, to hem a cloth, and to sweep the floor. A little older she showed me how to cut out my dresses, or how to turn and make up her old ones for the younger children. In those days people would have thought it a foolish thing for folks in our station to have bought ready-made clothes for their children; and as to buying bread, why, we should all have looked upon that as a disgrace. But now everybody buys their bread, and it's often poisonous, unhealthy stuff, most fit for the pig trough: that's what I think of baker's bread;' and the good old lady would always toss her head and purse up her mouth as she uttered these sentiments.

'When I was fifteen years of age, my father and mother told me that I was then old enough to go out to service and make my own way in the world; so it was settled that I should apply for the place of scullery-maid in Squire Dalton's family, as we had heard that the housekeeper wanted a girl there to help her. My mother at parting said, "Mary Maria Whitaker, you are now a strong, fine, tall, well-grown girl," and here my dear old friend would always pause in her narration and smile complacently, although from good contemporaneous authority I have always been assured that her height in her prime could never have exceeded 5 ft. 1 in. "'You are,'" she would continue, repeating the words of her mother, "'a hard-working body. You can knit a tidy pair of stockings; I can trust you to dust out the corners proper, and father doesn't complain of your baking, whilst you can pluck a fowl or roast a leg of mutton with the best of them; and you can hem, cross-stitch, and mark; so that you are a credit to your family. And although you're no great 'scholard' you can spell out the easy chapters of your Bible, which is as much as any respectable girl need want; and for the rest, father and I have taught you to fear God and behave reverently to your betters, whilst I hope you will always keep a kind heart for the poor and the sick.'" Mistress Wilmot, old Squire Dalton's housekeeper, was pleased with my appearance, and duly engaged me. She was, Mrs. Whitaker once informed me, 'a servant of a kind not now to be found. She dressed in the old-fashioned style, and wore a large muslin cap tied tightly under her chin, a fichu over her shoulders, and a spotless white linen apron with very big pockets. Her face

had habitually a stern expression, and her voice was shrill in giving an order. To the lazy or negligent she was severe and harsh, but for the under-servant who was painstaking and thorough in her work she had a kind smile at times, and I always found her,' Mrs. Whitaker told me, 'good enough to me after she had got over a certain suspicion she invariably entertained towards a newcomer.'

On one occasion, when I was a guest at Malden Priory, I sought my old friend out in her pretty little sitting-room, which had been refurnished by her master and mistress in order to please her. Here, like Miss Mattey in Mrs. Gaskell's charming story, Mrs. Whitaker had protected her new carpet from the rays of the sun by sheets of itinerant newspaper, whilst her curtains were always pinned back before the room was swept, for fear any dust should attach itself to them, and nobody with muddy boots ever obtained admittance into her apartment.

A sleek black cat purred before a cheerful wood fire, whilst hanging near each window was a cage containing a canary, the gifts of the 'young ladies,' I was informed.

'Come in, my dear young lady,' said Mrs. Whitaker; and after she had put another log on the fire, and begged me to be seated in her most comfortable armchair, she began to tell me of many things in the old days when she first entered the service of my cousin's father.

After informing me how frightened she had been as a girl when she had applied to Mrs. Wilmot for the vacant situation of scullery-maid, on account of that good lady's stern manner and demeanour, and yet how anxious she had been to be engaged, as her father had been the mason employed in constructing part of the house, she went on to tell me what had been her wages on entering the old Squire's service.

'My wages were 4*l.* 10*s.* a year, besides butter, tea, sugar, and other food. I had butcher's meat once a day, unless at such times when a fatted pig was killed, when I had a sausage instead for my midday meal, or maybe a slice of fresh pork. This seemed to me as good food as the most dainty girl need wish for. Not but what there's many young persons now that enter "Master Harry's" service so discontented that they would look upon such money as poor pay and such food as poor living; but tea was then 12*s.* per pound, and seemed to me a delicacy only to be drunk on great occasions or by great people.'

Although my cousin, Sir Henry Dalton, was considerably past

fifty when this little conversation between Mrs. Whitaker and myself took place, he remained always in her eyes the boyish young squire of thirty years ago; whilst his sisters, who had grown-up daughters at their sides, never grew older in her thoughts, and were to her the ‘young ladies’ of old days. During the many years of my acquaintance with Mrs. Whitaker her toilets consisted of but two in number—a little old-fashioned print gown, worn over balloon petticoats of a past mode, for everyday or common wear, and a stately black silk, the gift of my cousin’s mother, in which she duly appeared on Sundays and on all festivities.

‘What did you bring to the Hall by way of your trousseau?’ I once asked.

‘A small enough stock compared to what there’s many that bring here now,’ was the reply. ‘But then,’ continued my old friend with bitterness, ‘there’s no distinguishing now between a serving-wench and a lady of quality, excepting that the real ladies nowadays dress in black and suchlike dark colour, whereas the idle hussies put their wags on their backs and gallivant about in velvets and satins of red and blue. In my time it was a very different thing. No under-servant ever thought of wearing a plume in her bonnet or a flower in her hat. The most that girls ever wore in our station was a knot of ribbon; and as to jewellery, oh my!’ and here Mrs. Whitaker held up her hands in pious horror, ‘why, such a thing as that would have been thought an insult to their masters and mistresses. Now,’ she added sadly, ‘everything’s sold in the shops cheap and bad,’ and it seemed to her as if the dignity and splendour had departed from velvet and satin. ‘When I entered Master Harry’s papa’s service, I thought three print sprigged dresses enough for any decent girl, and then I had four pair of good stockings; and I know they were good, for I knitted them myself,’ enunciated the old lady with pride; ‘and though my linen was only of unbleached calico, still there was not a hole in it anywhere to be found. As to gloves, they were only then worn by the gentry, but my good mother gave me, soon after I went to the Hall, a pair of black mittens she had knitted herself, so that I might look as nice as the rest on Sundays.’

‘Did you like your late mistress?’ I asked, taking up from the table a miniature of that lady done by Hargreaves some sixty years ago.

‘*Like?*’ was the answer. ‘A servant didn’t like her mistress in my time, but I reverence her as the best lady I ever knew.

Not but what she was a sweet, pretty creature when I first saw her. She wore then her hair in lovely curls, had a skin like alabaster and the most beautiful soft grey eyes that I have ever seen. I can see her now as I saw her the first time she ever spoke to me, and it must have been about a fortnight after I came to the Hall. She wore a dove-coloured grey gown and a large hat rimmed with ostrich's feathers. "So you are Mrs. Wilmot's new little maid?" she said; to which I curtsied low, and replied that "I hoped I gave satisfaction." Whereupon she said, "Be a good girl, my child, and I will be your friend."

Over seventy years must have elapsed since this little interview between Mrs. Whitaker and her former mistress had taken place, but my good old friend's eyes always filled with tears when she recalled this little incident of the past.

The observation recorded of some one who, whilst visiting Paris, was asked what had most struck her during her tour in France, replied, 'To hear little children, not the height of my parasol, talk French,' is not more *naïve* than the ordinary incredulity entertained by the youth of every generation as to the possibility of their grandfathers and grandmothers ever having been young like themselves. In the same way let it be said, to my shame, I had always considered Mrs. Dalton as an old lady entirely given up to the performance of good works and acts of charity, but not as a blooming young creature in dove-coloured silk with liquid grey eyes.

'How did you busy yourself, Mrs. Whitaker?' I asked. My inquiry elicited the following reply:—

'I got up at four o'clock and helped to light the fires in winter. People weren't so lazy then as they are nowadays, and the finest lady would not then have thought it a hardship to be up to her breakfast at eight o'clock. After I had seen to the fires I baked the rolls for the Squire, as he always liked them crisp and hot. After breakfast I peeled the potatoes, cleaned the pans or the pewter with elder leaves, and washed up the dishes. As Mrs. Wilmot was pleased to say, I "was of a good understanding;" I soon learnt from her how to bake the cakes for the parlour and how to make the strange foreign dishes, though for my part I always consider kickshaws and such like but poor unwholesome food and bad for remaining long whiles on the stomach. In the afternoon I plied my needle, for Mistress Wilmot gave to each of us a task to do, and if I could get mine done in time I was

allowed to help Molly, the dairymaid, to drive in the cows and aid her in milking them.'

'Did you never have any play?' I asked.

'If you mean gallivanting about, my dear young lady,' was the reply, 'we certainly had none of that. It was not then considered necessary, in order to be happy, to gad about here, there, and everywhere. The servants at the Priory always had their proper feasts and festivals, according to the seasons of the year. They had a goose twice a year, at Michaelmas and on New Year's Day, a turkey and plum-pudding at Christmas, not to speak of a large cake on Twelfth Night, pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, hot cross buns and salted fish on Good Friday, and Easter eggs on Easter Sunday. Then as to diversions, they always played at snap-dragon and burnt the Yule log at Christmas, and duly danced out the old year, whilst we all drank from one bowl some fermity as the stable clock struck twelve. Then there was the harvest home, when the Squire gave a dinner to all the farm labourers and a tea to all their wives, and everything was of the best; after which we all danced on the green, whilst my old uncle, James Tedloft, played us tunes, and we danced such merry dances as "Haste to the wedding," "Four hands across and down the middle," and we always wound up with "Sir Roger de Coverley" and three cheers for the Squire and his good lady. And, my word, they did dance then,' continued the old lady with animation. 'In those days every lad and lass minded their steps, pointed their toes, and kept time to the music. Now dancing is nothing but twirling round, and not decent either to my mind. Everything is changed, and not for the better, I can assure you,' Mrs. Whitaker said with a sigh. 'It was a good time when I was young, when the rich gave freely and the poor were thankful. We didn't hear then so much of "trades unions" and "strikes" and suchlike. Now it's very different. The poor are educated and are impudent to their betters, and disdain their fathers and mothers because they can't read the hard books that they can or write the fine letters that they can pen; whilst the rich complain of seasonable weather, and go to foreign parts and spend their good money away from home, and nobody takes a pride in England. The gentry buy everything now from France and America, to the ruin of the farmers and to the abolition of the good ale that stood once in silver tankards on every gentleman's table.'

Mrs. Whitaker still continued in my cousin's employment, in the confidential capacity of housekeeper, several years after she

was eighty. She never seemed to feel old and never would allow that she was so. ‘When I get old,’ she would say, as a contingency which was not to be contemplated. She retained all her habits of activity until the week before her death. She never could be persuaded to take a seat in Lady Dalton’s presence, as she alleged that it was discordant from her notions of propriety and etiquette, and that she never had addressed the gentry so and never would.

She was a complete mistress of all household arts. Her preserves were excellent, and her hams and bacon had quite a little local celebrity amongst my cousin’s acquaintance.

Every year she sent to a peer (an old friend of hers) a ham, two jars of pickles, and a cake, always made with her own hands and according to a special recipe. Enclosed in the hamper containing the provisions was a letter addressed to Lord S., beginning thus: ‘My Lord, dear Friend.’

To Lady Dalton she invariably wrote ‘Madam, dear Friend.’ This has always appeared to me the most beautiful commencement of a letter from an old and attached servant, combining respect with affection. She always concluded her letter by sending ‘her duty’ and piously hoping that the blessing of God would rest upon her master’s family.

Mrs. Whitaker was very tenacious of her authority and would not be gainsayed in any household matters. An officious but well-meaning and zealous young curate, who was much impressed by the wickedness of the inhabitants of his new parish, begged leave from Mrs. Whitaker to come up to the Hall once a week and admonish and rebuke the servants there for their various sins. This proposition she utterly declined. ‘It’s your place, sir, to tell us of our sins on Sundays in church, and it’s my place here on weekdays in my own household.’

She also resented keenly any interference on my cousin’s part in matters that she deemed her own special department. If her master or mistress ventured to suggest a change, however small, it never met with her approval, and she would always say, ‘I couldn’t do with that. No, dear sir,’ or ‘madam,’ as the case might be, ‘I think I know better what’s befitting a gentleman’s household.’

She seldom would summon a doctor if the servants were ill, and only if seriously so. Many were her preparations and decoctions for internal and external use. Her care of the house was excessive, which, be it said, she regarded far more as her own than

the property of her master or mistress. During their absence from Malden Priory all the furniture was carefully encased in brown holland wrappers, and the china ornaments were all wrapped in silver paper, to prevent them suffering from the injurious effects of dust or dirt. On their return it was her delight to fill my cousin's Lowestoft cups with the gay blossoms of the everlasting and to replenish her delft jars with the most fragrant *pot-pourri*. Her literature consisted of but two classes of books, the perusal of the Bible on Sundays and the investigation of the tradesmen's weekly bills on week days.

Many were the times, when I have stayed on a visit with my cousins, that I have peeped in through Mrs. Whitaker's little sitting-room window, overlooking the old bowling-green in the Priory garden, and discovered my old friend immersed in the contemplation of the weekly bills. She conscientiously added up herself every one of their columns, and always detected the slightest error, whilst her method of bookkeeping and managing accounts was excellent. She disliked all foreigners, but her hatred of the French had all the intensity and freshness of 1815. Whenever my cousins returned from a tour on the Continent, she always expressed thankfulness for their preservation, but hoped that, as they had been spared this once, they would never tempt Providence by going there again. The old caricature in 'Punch' of the two foreigners looking at a washhandstand, and inquiring of each other 'Vat is dat?' would have been in her eyes but sober reality. On Lady Dalton's first visit abroad her husband's dismay may be better imagined than described when, on reaching Calais, an enormous packing-case was discovered amongst her luggage containing towels and soap, her lady's maid having been led to believe by Mrs. Whitaker that such articles were not to be procured in France.

Happily her last illness was not attended with much suffering and was of short duration. On a Monday she got up, but for the first time for over seventy years did not make her own bed. She came downstairs, but was soon afterwards seized with a shivering fit, and had to be carried up to her own room again, where the old family doctor, an old personal friend of hers, attended her. She fretted much at first at her enforced idleness and at the notion that her keys would be handled and used by others. After a few days she steadily grew weaker, but happily at the same time became reconciled to her condition. She talked much of former days, of her father and mother, and of that period which was

specially dear to her, the early days of her service at Malden Priory. Towards the close of the third day she seemed to suffer greatly, but her end was mercifully painless. At last she slept away into the other life, the change between life and death being almost imperceptible.

Thus ended, after a long career of usefulness, of great fidelity, of daily fortitude and goodness, my dear old friend, about whom may be said, as of others in her position—

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

It may perhaps be said that old servants are difficult to deal with, over-sensitive, and often obstinate in refusing to carry out any alteration or to allow any necessary change; but the old saying must be remembered, ‘To no man a second mother,’ and so likewise none of us will find in the world the same devotion that is so often evinced by an old servant to his master. Deep love and tender affection, even if accompanied by what may seem ridiculous and tiresome, form sweet and lasting ties, and are debts that can never be paid.

Even the delicate satire of Du Maurier, and the broader humour of Leech, have failed to exaggerate the follies of modern servants and the foolish and fanciful causes given by them for quitting the service of their employers.

‘To leave in order to get a change’ is become between masters and servants a regular, recognised reason.

‘I have no fault to find against you and Lord G——,’ a house-maid said to a friend of mine a short time ago, ‘but I want a change, and I don’t like H——shire scenery or air.’

Another friend of mine had a footman who left her ‘because,’ he said, ‘he could no longer stay, as he regretted to find that his employer did not keep the company he had been accustomed to.’

A scullery-maid that had been engaged for me begged to leave, as she declined to take any orders from *me*, declaring that she could only take orders from the person who had engaged her.

A foreman in the employment of one of my friends allowed a great quantity of his master’s greenhouse glass to be broken during a storm, ‘because,’ he said, ‘it was not his place to close the windows, and that he wasn’t engaged to tell the second man his business.’

A maid to whom I once offered a situation declined it on the ground that she had once lived in a duke's family, and could not possibly sink lower than a viscount's, or else, to use her own words, 'she would lose all self-respect,' whilst a housemaid left me because she declared that she considered the men servants of the establishment too deficient in good looks to keep company with. That the feelings as regarded her had been reciprocal on the part of the male attendants I have always had my shrewd suspicions; for nobody, save perhaps herself, would have described her as a beauty.

It is easy to multiply such incidents, and the above anecdotes will doubtless recall others of a similar character.

Of late there has been a strong attempt on the part of the world to treat service as a mere contract between employer and employed. Certain things are to be done for certain payments, as specified in an agreement, and beyond this no more is to be expected on either side. But men and women are not machines, but breathe, and love, and often act impetuously, and a *mere* contract must always appear to any man who has a spark of the divine fire in his nature as unchristian and immoral. There are more contingencies in life than can ever be foreseen. It is service without love or zeal that is really degrading and menial.

Common as light is love,
And its familiar voice wearies not ever.

Surely the great Dutch painter dreamt of something nobler than scanty service or mere remuneration when he painted his immortal canvases of Charles and his old retainer or Strafford and his secretary. No true service can be performed without affection. What can be more pathetic or beautiful than the story recorded of the old Welsh woman who, after the fire at Wynnstay in 1858, brought to Lady Wynn her little hoard of savings, begging her to accept them towards the rebuilding of the house?

Whilst modern servants are often much to blame for giving but grudging service, and for taking but scanty care of the goods entrusted to their charge, it would not be fair to conclude without looking at the other side of the medallion.

Masters no longer look upon their servants as part of their family. Masters and mistresses are often impatient and foolishly exacting, and expect impossibilities in the shape of 'old heads on young shoulders.' They must not only be just, but kind and indulgent, and not forget that youth is youth in every class.

The severe old spinster who declares that she will allow no followers is unjust and unreasonable, for girls will be in love and have lovers all the world over. The wise mistress of a household inquires into the character of the ‘*prétendant*,’ and if that is satisfactory allows the young people to meet each other.

Ingratitude, it is to be feared, has become much more common amongst masters than it used to be. It was only the other day that I heard a story of a country *soi-disant* gentleman who allowed his old nurse, when she was crippled with rheumatism, to spend her old age in the workhouse ; whilst a magnate who received a peerage from a grateful queen and country for party services, on being told one day that he had shot one of the beaters, replied, ‘ Oh, he must take all that in the day’s work,’ and, although the man was seriously injured, refused to make him any monetary reparation.

A woman well known in ‘society’ once had in her service a kitchenmaid who was suffering from general debility of health. On a doctor seeing her he ordered her a tumbler of new milk every morning. To the surprise of the girl, who knew the stingy habits of her employer, his order was complied with ; but in a few months’ time, when she was given notice to quit, what was the poor girl’s dismay to find that the cost of the milk had been deducted from her slender earnings !

‘ Noblesse oblige ’ used to be the old saying ; ‘ Noblesse permet ’ is too often the modern one.

Charities and acts of benevolence in these latter days of ours are done too much by deputy, too little by personal supervision. It is not enough for a rich man to open his pockets or draw a cheque. The delicacy of personal care in cases of sickness and illness is what best knits class to class and draws best the sting from class distinctions.

In the Middle Ages there was a certain grandeur in the extreme humility which induced ladies of the highest rank, in imitation of their Lord, to wash the feet of beggars. It would be folly so far now to copy them in deed, but it is well to remember that the great wave of Socialism, which bids fair to swamp society as now constituted, can only be arrested by constant association of the upper and lower classes and by acts of kindness and generosity from those who possess the good things of this world.

In illness or sickness, therefore, no care is too great, or wasted if lavished upon any member of a household. No expense should be spared to show the servant that, while a master has the right

to expect him to regard his interests in health, he feels it his duty to take every opportunity of ministering to his servant's wants in sickness, old age, or trouble.

Every one must feel that *mere* money is not sufficient payment for devoted attention and care in illness ; for what can remunerate amply for long sleepless nights or the wearisome irritability of a suffering patient ? One of the weaknesses of the present day, to use a homely simile, is the desire of most people 'to eat their cake and have it,' and servants are not exceptions from this rule. Thus they aspire to all the *laisser-aller* of a democracy in good times and health, and to all the comforts and care of the feudal system in sickness or old age.

'No man is a hero to his valet' runs the bitter old proverb, but a nobler position than the reverse can hardly be imagined.

A man who can remain unspoilt by the applause of the world, by the enthusiasm and hero-worship of literary or political followers, who can still keep pure and remain gentle and unselfish in the little things of daily life, who can pass through the hard ordeal unscathed of worrying circumstances and petty annoyances, is, perhaps, the most beautiful character to be found on earth. To few are given the eloquence, the power, or the necessary talents that would enable them to add their names to the list of fame ; but to all it is possible, from the highest to the lowest, to make their home circle bright or dark, and to inspire those that immediately surround them with respect and affection or contempt and dislike.

CATHERINE MILNES GASKELL.

Madam.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER LIX.

WHEN John Trevanion questioned Everard, as already recorded, the young man, though greatly disconcerted, had made him a very unexpected reply. He had the boldness to say what was so near the truth that there was all the assurance of conviction in his tone, and John, on his side, was confounded. Everard had declared to him that there was a family connection, a relationship, between himself and Mr. Trevanion, though on being more closely questioned, he declined to explain how it was, that is, he postponed the explanation, saying that he could only make the matter clear by reference to another relation, who could give him the exact information. It was a bold thought, conceived at the moment, and carried through with the daring of desperation. He felt, before it was half said, that John Trevanion was impressed by the reality in his tone, and that if he dared further, and told all his tale, the position of affairs might be changed. But Rosalind's reply to the sudden declaration which in his boldness he had made, and to his vague, ill-advised promises to reward her if she would listen to him, had driven for some days everything out of his mind; and when he met Roland Hamerton he was but beginning to recall his courage, and to say to himself that there was still something which might be done, and that things were not perhaps so hopeless as they seemed. From that brief interview he went away full of a sudden resolution. If after all this card was the one to play, did not he hold it in his hand? If it was by means of the lost mother that Rosalind was to be won, it was by the same means alone that he could prove to John Trevanion all he had promised to prove, and thus set himself right with Rosalind's guardian. Thoughts crowded fast upon him as he turned away, instinctively making a round to escape Hamerton's scrutiny. This led him back at length to the precincts of the hotel, where he plunged among the shrubbery, passing round behind the house, and entered by a small door which was almost hid by a clump of laurels. A short stair led from this to a small entirely secluded apartment separated from the other part of the hotel. The room which young Everard entered

with a sort of authoritative familiarity was well lighted with three large windows opening upon the garden, but seemed to be a sort of receptacle for all the old furniture despised elsewhere. It had but one occupant, who put down the book when Everard came in, and looked up with a faint, inquiring smile. The reader does not need to be told who was the banished woman who sat here, shut out and separated from the external world. She had thought it wise, amid the risks of travel, to call herself by the name he bore, and had been living here, as everywhere, in complete retirement, before the arrival of the Trevanions. The apartment which she occupied was cheap and quiet, one of which recommendations was of weight with her in consequence of Edmund's expenses; the other for reasons of her own. She had changed greatly in the course of these two years, not only by becoming very thin and worn, but also from a kind of moral exhaustion which had taken the place of that personal power and dignity which were once the prevailing expression of her face. She had borne much in the former part of her life without having the life itself crushed out of her; but her complete transference to a strange world, her absorption in one sole subject of interest which presented nothing noble, nothing elevated, and finally the existence of a perpetual petty conflict in which she was always the loser, a struggle to make a small nature into a great one, or rather to deal with the small nature as if it were a great one, to attribute to it finer motives than it could even understand, and to appeal with incessant failure to generousities which did not exist—this had taken the strength out of Mrs. Trevanian. Her face had an air of exhausted and hopeless effort. She saw the young man approaching with a smile, which, though faint, was yet one of welcome. To be ready to receive him whenever he should appear, to be always ready and on the watch for any gleam of higher meaning, to be dull to no better impulse, but always waiting for the good, that was the part she had to play. But she was no longer impatient, no longer eager to thrust him into her own world, to convey to him her own thoughts. That, she knew, was an endeavour without hope. And, as a matter of fact, she had little hope in anything. She had done all that she knew how to do. If anything further was possible, she was unaware what it was: and her face, like her heart, was worn out. Yet she looked up with what was not unlike a cheerful expectation. ‘Well, Edmund?’ she said.

He threw down his hat on the table, giving emphasis to what he said.

‘I have brought you some news—I don’t know if you will like it or not, or if it will be a surprise. The Trevanions are after you.’

The smile faded away from her face, but seemed to linger pathetically in her eyes as she looked at him and repeated, ‘After me!’ with a start.

‘Yes. Of course all those visits and apparitions couldn’t be

without effect. You must have known that ; and you can't say I did not warn you. They are moving heaven and earth—'

'How can they do that ?' she asked ; and then, 'You reproach me justly, Edmund ; not so much as I reproach myself. I was mad to do it, and frighten—my poor children.'

'More than that,' he said, as if he took a pleasure in adding colour to the picture ; 'the little girl has gone all wrong in her head. She walks in her sleep and says she is looking for her mother.'

The tears sprang to Mrs. Trevanion's eyes. 'Oh, Edmund !' she said, 'you wring my heart ; and yet it is sweet ! My little girl ! she does not forget me !'

'Children don't forget,' he said, gloomily. 'I didn't. I cried for you often enough, but you never came to me.'

She gave him once more a piteous look, to which the tears in her eyes added pathos. 'Not—till it was too late,' she said.

'Not—till you were obliged ; till you had no one else to go to,' said he. 'And you have not done very much for me since—nothing that you could help. Look here ! You can make up for that now, if you like ; there's every opportunity now.'

'What is it, Edmund ?' She relapsed into the chair which supplied a sort of framework on which mind and body seemed alike to rest.

Edmund drew a chair opposite to her, close to her, and threw himself down in it. His hand raised to enhance his rhetoric was almost like the threat of a blow.

'Look here,' he repeated ; 'I have told you before all I feel about—Rosalind !'

'And I have told you,' she said, with a faint rising colour, 'that you have no right to call her by that name. There is no sort of link between Miss Trevanion and you.'

'She doesn't think so,' he answered, growing red. 'She has always felt there was a link, although she didn't know what. There are two other fellows after her now. I know that one of them, and I rather think both of them, are hunting for you, by way of getting a hold on Rosalind. One of them asked me just now if I wouldn't help him. Me ! And that woman that was the nurse at Highcourt, that began all the mischief, is here. So you will be hunted out whatever you do. And John Trevanion is at me, asking me what had I to do with his brother. I don't know how he knows ; but he does know. I've told him there was a family connection, but that I couldn't say what till I had consulted—'

'You said *that*, Edmund ? A—family connection !'

'Yes, I did. What else could I say ? And isn't it true ? Now, here are two things you can do : one would be kind, generous, all that I don't expect from you ; the other would at least leave us to fight fair. Look here ! I believe they would be quite glad. It would be a way of smoothing up everything and stopping all

sorts of scandal. Come up there with me straight and tell them who I am ; and tell Rosalind that you want her to cast off the others and marry me. She will do whatever you tell her.'

'Never, never, Edmund.' She had begun to shake her head, looking at him, for some time before he would permit her voice to be heard. 'Oh, ask me anything but that !'

'Anything but the only thing,' he said ; 'that is like you ; that is always the way. Can't you see it would be a way of smoothing over everything ? It would free Rosalind—it would free them all : if she were my——'

She put out her hand to stop him. 'No, Edmund, you must not say it. I cannot permit it. That cannot be. You do not understand her, nor she you. I can never permit it, even if—even if——'

'Even if—? You mean to say if she were—fond of me——'

Mrs. Trevanion uttered a low cry. 'Edmund, I will rather go and tell her, what I have told you—that you could never understand each other—that you are different, wholly different—that nothing of the kind could be——'

He glared at her with a fierce rage, by which she was no longer frightened, which she had seen before, but which produced in her overwrought mind a flutter of the old sickening misery which had fallen into so hopeless a calm. 'That is what you will do for me—when affairs come to an issue !—that is all—after everything you have promised, everything you have said—that is all ; but I might have known——'

She made no reply. She was so subdued in her nature by all the hopeless struggles of the past, that she did not say a word in self-defence.

'Then,' he said, rising up from his chair, throwing out his hands as though putting her out of her place, 'go ! That's the only other thing you can do for me. Get out of this. Why stay till they come and drag you out to the light and expose you—and me ? If you won't do the one thing for me, do the other, and make no more mischief, for the love of heaven—if you care for heaven or for love either,' he added, making a stride towards the table and seizing his hat again. He did not, however, rush away then, as seemed his first intention, but stood for a moment irresolute, not looking at her, holding his hat in his hand.

'Edmund,' she said, 'you are always sorry afterwards when you say such things to me.'

'No,' he said, 'I'm not sorry—don't flatter yourself—I mean every word I say. You've been my worst enemy all my life. And since you've been with me it's been worst of all. You've made me your slave ; you've pretended to make a gentleman of me, and you've made me a slave. I have never had my own way or my fling, but had to drag about with you. And now, when you really could do me good—when you could help me to marry the

girl I like, and reform, and everything—you won’t! You tell me point-blank you won’t! You say you’ll rather ruin me than help me. Do you call that the sort of thing a man has a right to expect—after all I have suffered in the past?’

‘Edmund, I have always told you that Miss Trevanion——’

‘Rosalind!’ he said. ‘Whatever you choose to call her, I shall call her by her name. I have been everything with them till now, when this friend of yours, this Uncle John, has come. And you can put it all right with him, if you please, in a moment, and make my way clear. And now you say you won’t! Oh, yes, I know you well enough. Let all those little things go crazy and everybody be put out, rather than lend a real helping hand to me——’

‘Edmund!’ she called to him, holding out her hands as he rushed to the door; but he felt he had got a little advantage and would not risk the loss of it again. He turned round for a moment and addressed her with a sort of solemnity.

‘To-morrow!’ he said. ‘I’ll give you till to-morrow to think it over, and then—I’ll do for myself whatever I find it best to do.’

For a minute or two after the closing of the door, which was noisy and sharp, there was no further movement in the dim room. Mrs. Trevanion sat motionless, even from thought. The framework of the chair supported her, held her up, but for the moment, as it seemed to her, nothing else in earth and heaven. She sat entirely silent, passive, as she had done so often during these years, all her former habits of mind arrested. Once she had been a woman of energy, to whom a defeat or discouragement was but a new beginning, whose resources were manifold; but all these had been exhausted. She sat in the torpor of that hopelessness which had become habitual to her, life failing and everything in life. As she sat thus, an inner door opened, and another figure, which had grown strangely like her own in the close and continual intercourse between them, came in softly. Jane was noiseless as her mistress, almost as worn as her mistress, moving like a shadow across the room. Her presence made a change in the motionless atmosphere. Madam was no longer alone; and with the softening touch of that devotion which had accompanied all her wanderings for so great a portion of her life, there arose in her a certain reawakening, a faint flowing of the old vitality. There were, indeed, many reasons why the ice should be broken and the stream resume its flowing. She raised herself a little in her chair, and then she spoke. ‘Jane,’ she said, ‘Jane, I have news of the children——’

‘God bless them!’ said Jane. She put the books down out of her hands, which she had been pretending to arrange, and turned her face towards her mistress, who said ‘Amen!’ with a sudden gleam and lighting up of her pale face like the sky after a storm.

‘I have done very wrong,’ said Mrs. Trevanion; ‘there is never self-indulgence in the world but some one suffers for it,

Jane, my little Amy is ill. She dreams about her poor mother. She has taken to walking in her sleep.'

'Well, Madam, that's no great harm. I have heard of many children who did—'

'But not through—oh, such selfish folly as mine. I have grown so weak, such a fool. And they have sent for Russell, and Russell is here. You may meet her any day—'

'Russell!' Jane said, with an air of dismay, clasping her hands; 'then, Madam, you must make up your mind what you will do, for Russell is not one to be baulked. She will find us out.'

'Why should I fear to be found out?' said Mrs. Trevanion, with a faint smile. 'No one now can harm me. Jane, everything has been done that can be done to us. I do not fear Russell or any one. And sometimes it seems to me that I have been wrong all along. I think now I have made up my mind—'

'To what? oh, to what, Madam?' Jane cried.

'I am not well,' said Mrs. Trevanion; 'I am only a shadow of myself. I am not at all sure but perhaps I may be going to die. No, no—I have no presentiments, Jane. It is only people who want to live who have presentiments, and life has few charms for me. But look at me; you can see through my hands almost. I am dreadfully tired coming up those stairs. I should not be surprised if I were to die.'

She said this apologetically, as if she were putting forth a plea to which perhaps objections might be made.

'You have come through a deal, Madam,' said Jane, with the matter-of-fact tone of her class. 'It is no wonder if you are thin; you have had a great deal of anxiety. But trouble doesn't kill.'

'Sometimes,' said her mistress, with a smile, 'in the long run. But I don't say I am sure. Only, if that was so—there would be no need to deny myself.'

'You will send for the children and Miss Rosalind.' Jane clasped her hands with a cry of anticipation in which her whole heart went forth.

'That would be worth dying for,' said Madam, 'to have them all peaceably for perhaps a day or two. Ah! but I should need to be very bad before we could do that; and I am not ill, not that I know. I have thought of something else, Jane. It appears that they have found out, or think they have found out, that I am here. I cannot just steal away again as I did before. I will go to them and see them all. Ah, don't look so pleased; that probably means that we shall have to leave afterwards at once. Unless things were to happen so well, you know,' she said, with a smile, 'as that I should just really—die there: which would be ideal—but therefore not to be hoped for.'

'Oh, Madam,' said Jane, with a sob, 'you don't think, when you say that—'

'Of you, my only friend? But I do. You would be glad to

think, after a while, that I had got over it all. And what could happen better to me than that I should die among my own? I am of little use to Edmund—far less than I hoped. Perhaps I had no right to hope. One cannot give up one's duties for years, and then take them back again. God forgive me for leaving him—and him for all the faults that better training might have saved him from. All the tragedy began in that, and ends in that. I did wrong, and the issue is—this.'

'So long ago, Madam—so long ago. And it all seemed so simple.'

'To give up my child for his good, and then to be forced to give up my other children, not for their good or mine? I sometimes wonder how it was that I never told John Trevanion, who was always my friend. Why did I leave Highcourt so, without a word to any one? It all seems confused now, as if I might have done better. I might have cleared myself at least; I might have told them. I should like to give myself one great indulgence, Jane, before I die.'

'Madam!' Jane cried, with a panic which her words belied, 'I am sure that it is only fancy; you are not going to die.'

'Perhaps,' said her mistress; 'I am not sure at all. I told you so; but only I should not be surprised. Whether it is death, or whether it is life, something new is coming. We must be ghosts no longer; we must come back to our real selves—you and I, Jane. We will not let ourselves be hunted down, but come out in the eye of day. It would be strange if Russell had the power to frighten me. And did I tell you that Reginald is here, too, and young Roland Hamerton, who was at Highcourt that night? They are all gathered together again for the end of the tragedy, Jane.'

'Oh, Madam,' cried Jane, 'perhaps for setting it all right.'

Her mistress smiled somewhat dreamily. 'I do not see how that can be. And even if it were so, it will not change the state of affairs. But we are not going to allow ourselves to be found out by Russell,' she added, with a curious sense of the ludicrous. The occasion was not gay; and yet there was something natural—almost a sound of amusement—in the laugh with which she spoke. Jane looked at her wistfully, shaking her head.

'When I think of all that you have gone through, and that you can laugh still! but perhaps it is better than crying,' Jane said.

Mrs. Trevanion nodded her head in assent, and there was silence in the dim room where these two women spent their lives. It gave her a certain pleasure to see Jane moving about. There was a sort of lull of painful sensation, a calm, and disinclination for any exertion on her own part; a mood in which it was grateful to see another entirely occupied with her wants; anxious only to invent more wants for her, and means of doing her service. In the languor of this quiet it was not wonderful

that Mrs. Trevanion should feel her life ebbing away. She began to look forward to the end of the tragedy with a pleased acquiescence. She had yielded to her fate at first, understanding it to be hopeless to strive against it; with perhaps a recoil from actual contact with the scandal and the shame which was as much pride as submission; but at that time her strength was not abated, nor any habit of living lost. Now that period of anguish seemed far off, and she judged herself and her actions not without a great pity and understanding, but yet not without some disapproval. She thought over it all as she sat lying back in the great chair with Jane moving softly about. She would not repeat the decisive and hasty step she had once taken. She could not now, alas! believe in the atonement which she had then thought might still be practicable in respect to the son whom she had given up in his childhood; nor did she think that it was well, as she had done then, to abandon everything without a word—to leave her reputation at the mercy of every evil-speaker. To say nothing for herself, to leave her dead husband's memory unassailed by any defence she could put forth, and to cut short the anguish of parting, for her children as well as for herself, had then seemed to her the best. And she had fondly thought, with what she now called vanity and the delusion of self-regard, that by devoting herself to him who was the cause of all her troubles, she might make up for the evils which her desertion of him had inflicted. These were mistakes, she recognised now, and must not be repeated. 'I was a fool,' she said to herself, softly, with a realisation of the misery of the past which was acute yet dim, as if the sufferer had been another person. Jane paused at the sound of her voice and came towards her—'Madam, did you speak?'

'No, except to myself. My faithful Jane, you have suffered everything with me. We are not going to hide ourselves any longer,' she replied.

CHAPTER LX.

A RESOLUTION thus taken is not however strong enough to overcome the habits which have grown with years. Mrs. Trevanion had been so long in the background that she shrank from the idea of presenting herself again to what seemed to her the view of the world. She postponed all further steps with a conscious cowardice, at which with faint humour she was still able to smile.

'We are two owls,' she said. 'Jane, we will make a little reconnaissance first in the evening. There is still a moon, though it is a little late, and the lake in the moonlight is a fine sight.'

'But, Madam, you were not thinking of the lake,' said Jane.

'No,' her mistress said; 'the sight of a roof and four walls within which are—that is more to you and me than the most

beautiful scenery in the world. And to think for how many years I had nothing to do but to walk from my room to the nursery to see them all !'

Jane shook her head with silent sympathy. 'And it will be so again,' she said, soothingly, 'when Mr. Rex is of age. I have always said to myself it would come right then.'

It was now Madam's turn to shake her head. The smile died away from her face. 'I would rather not,' she said, hurriedly, 'put him to that proof. It would be a terrible test to put a young creature to. Oh no, no, Jane ! If he failed, how could I bear it ?—or did for duty what should be done for love ? No, no ; the boy must not be put to such a test.'

In the evening she carried out her idea of making a reconnaissance. She set out when the moon was rising in a vaporous autumnal sky, clearing slowly as the light increased. Madam threw back the heavy veil which she usually wore, and breathed in the keen sweet air with almost a pang of pleasure. She grasped Jane's arm as they drove slowly round the tufted mound upon which the house of Bonport stood—then, as the coachman paused for further instructions in the shade of the little eminence on the further side, she whispered breathlessly that she would walk a little way and see it nearer. They got out accordingly, both mistress and maid, tremulous with excitement. All was so still—not a creature about—the lighted windows shining among the trees ; there seemed no harm in venturing within the gate which was open, in ascending the slope a little way. Mrs. Trevanion had begun to say faintly, half to herself half to her companion, 'This is vanity : it is no use—it is no use,' when suddenly her grasp upon Jane's arm tightened so that the faithful maid had to make an effort not to cry out. 'What is that ?' she said in a shrill whisper at Jane's ear. It was nothing more than a little speck, but it moved along under the edge of the overhanging trees, with evident life in it—a speck which, as it emerged into the moonlight, became of a dazzling whiteness like a pale flame gliding across the solid darkness. They both stood still for a moment in awe and wonder, clinging to each other. Then Madam forsook her maid's arm, and went forward with a swift and noiseless step very different from her former lingering. Jane followed breathless, afraid, not capable of the same speed. No doubt had been in Mrs. Trevanion's mind from the first. The night air lifted now and then a lock of the child's hair and blew cold through her long white night-dress, but she went on steadily towards the side of the lake. Once more Amy was absorbed in her dream that her mother was waiting for her there : and all unconscious, wrapped in her sleep, had set out to find the one great thing wanting in her life. The mother followed her, conscious of nothing save a great throbbing of head and heart. Thus they went on till the white breadth of the lake flooded with moonlight lay before

them. Then for the first time Amy wavered. She came to a pause : something disturbed the absorption of her state, but without awaking her. ‘Mamma,’ she said ; ‘where are you, mamma ?’

‘I am here, my darling.’ Mrs. Trevanion’s voice was choked and scarcely audible in the strange mystery of this encounter. She dared not clasp her child in her arms, but stood trembling, watching every indication, terrified to disturb the illusion, yet hungering for the touch of the little creature who was her own. Amy’s little face showed no surprise, its lines softened with a smile of pleasure ; she put out her cold hand and placed it in that which trembled to receive it. It was no wonder to Amy in her dream to put her hand into her mother’s. She gave herself up to this beloved guidance without any surprise or doubt, and obeyed the impulse given her without the least resistance, with a smile of heavenly satisfaction on her face. All Amy’s troubles were over when her hand was in her mother’s hand. Nor was her little soul, in its soft confusion and unconsciousness, aware of any previous separation, or any transport of reunion. She went where her mother led, calm as if that mother had never been parted from her. As for Mrs. Trevanion, the tumult of trouble and joy in her soul is impossible to describe. She made an imperative gesture to Jane, who had come panting after her, and now stood half-stupefied in the way, only prevented by that stupor of astonishment from bursting out into sobs and cries. Her mistress could not speak ; her face was not visible in the shadow as she turned her back upon the lake which revealed this wonderful group fully against its shining background. There was no sound audible but the faint stir of the leaves, theplash of the water, the cadence of her quick breathing. Jane followed in an excitement almost as overpowering. There was not a word said. Mrs. Trevanion turned back and made her way through the trees, along the winding path, with not a pause or mistake. It was dark among the bushes, but she divined the way, and though both strength and breath would have failed her in other circumstances, there was no sign of faltering now. The little terrace in front of the house, to which they reached at last, was brilliant with moonlight. And here she paused, the child standing still in perfect calm, having resigned her very soul into her mother’s hands.

Then for the first time a great fainting and trembling seized upon her. She held out her disengaged hand to Jane. ‘What am I to do ?’ she said with an appeal to which Jane, trembling, could give no reply. The closed doors, the curtained windows, were all dark. A momentary struggle rose in Mrs. Trevanion’s mind, a wild impulse to carry the child away, to take her into her bosom, to claim her natural rights, if never again, yet for this night—mingled with a terror that seemed to take her senses from her, lest the door should suddenly open, and she be discovered. Her strength forsook her when she most wanted it. Amy stood

still by her side, without a movement, calm, satisfied, wrapped in unconsciousness, knowing nothing save that she had attained her desire, feeling neither cold nor fear in the depth of her dream.

'Madam,' said Jane in an anxious whisper, 'the child will catch her death. I'd have carried her. She has nothing on but her night-dress. She will catch her death.'

This roused the mother in a moment, with the simplest but most profound of arguments. She bade Jane knock at the door; and, stooping over Amy, kissed her and blessed her. Then she transferred the little hand in hers to that of her faithful maid. A shiver passed through the child's frame, but she permitted herself to be led to the door. Jane was not so self-restrained as her mistress. She lifted the little girl in her arms and began to chafe and rub her feet. The touch, though it was warm and kind, woke the little somnambulist, as the touch of the cold water had done before. She gave a scream and struggled out of Jane's arms.

And then there was a great sound of movement and alarm from the house. The door was flung open, and Rosalind rushed out and seized Amy in her arms. She was followed by half the household, the servants hurrying out one after another; and there arose a hurried tumult of questions in the midst of which Jane stole away unnoticed and escaped among the bushes, like her mistress. Mrs. Trevanion stood quite still, supporting herself against a tree, while all this confused commotion went on. She distinguished Russell, who came out and looked so sharply about among the dark shrubs that for a moment she felt herself discovered, and John Trevanion, who appeared with a candle in his hand, lifting it high above his head, and inquiring who it was that had brought the child back. John's face was anxious and full of trouble; and behind him came a tall boy, slight and fair, who said there was nobody, and that Amy must have come back by herself. Then Mrs. Lennox came out with a shawl over her head, the flickering lights showing her full, comfortable person—'Who is it, John? Is there anybody? Oh come in then, come in; it is a cold night, and the child must be put to bed.' All of them stood about in their individuality, as she had left them, while she looked on in the darkness under the rustling boughs, invisible, her eyes sometimes blurred with moisture, a smile growing about her mouth. They had not changed, except the boy—her boy! She kept her eyes on his face, through the thick shade of the leaves and the flickering of the candles. He was almost a man, God bless him—a slight moustache on his upper lip, his hair darker—and so tall like the best of the Trevanions—God bless him! But no, no, he must not be put to that test—never to that test. She would not permit it, she said to herself, with a horrible sensation in her heart, which she did not put into words, that he could not bear it. She did not seem able to move from the support of her tree even after the door was

closed and all was silence again. Jane, in alarm, groped about the bushes till she had found her mistress, but did not succeed in leading her away. ‘A little longer,’ she said faintly. After a while a large window on the other side of the door opened and John Trevanion came out again into the moonlight, walking up and down on the terrace with a very troubled face. By-and-by another figure appeared, and Rosalind joined him. ‘I came to tell you she is quite composed now—going to sleep again,’ said Rosalind. ‘Oh, Uncle John, something is going to happen; it is coming nearer and nearer. I am sure that, either living or dead, Amy has seen mamma.’

‘My dear, all these agitations are too much for you,’ said John Trevanion. ‘I think I must take you away.’

‘Uncle John, it is not agitation. I was not agitated to-night; I was quite at ease, thinking about—oh, thinking about very different things; I am ashamed of myself when I remember how little I was thinking. Russell is right, and I was to blame.’

‘My dear, I believe there is a safeguard against bodily ailments in that condition. We must look after her better again.’

‘But she has seen mamma, Uncle John?’

‘Rosalind, you are so full of sense—’

‘What has sense to do with it?’ she cried. ‘Do you think the child came back by herself? And yet there was no one with her—no one. Who else could have led her back? Mamma took away her hand, and she woke. Uncle John, none of you can find her; but if she is not dead—and you say she is not dead—my mother must be here.’

Jane had dropped upon her knees, and was keeping down by force, with her face pressed against her mistress’s dress, her sobs and tears. But Mrs. Trevanion clung to her tree and listened and made no sound. There was a smile upon her face of pleasure that was heartrending, more pitiful than pain.

‘My dear Rosalind,’ said John, in great distress, ‘my dearest girl! I have told you she is not dead. And if she is here we shall find her. We are certain to find her. Rosalind, if *she* were here, what would she say to you? Not to agitate and excite yourself, to try to be calm, to wait. My dear,’ he said, with a tremble in his voice, ‘your mother would never wish to disturb your life; she would like you to be—happy; she would like you—you know—your mother—’

It appeared that he became incoherent, and could say no more.

The house was closed again and all quiet before Jane, who had been in despair, could lead Mrs. Trevanion away. She yielded at length from weakness; but she did not hear what her faithful servant said to her. Her mind had fallen, or rather risen, into a state of semi-conscious exaltation, like the ecstasy of an ascetic, as her delicate and fragile form grew numb and powerless in the damp and cold.

'Did you think any one could stand and hear all that and never make a sign?' she said. 'Did you see her face, Jane? It was like an angel's. I think that must be her window with the light in it. And he said her mother—John was always my friend. He said her mother—Where do you want me to go? I should like to stay in the porch and die there comfortably, Jane. It would be sweet; and then there could be no more quarrelling or questions, or putting any one to the test. No test! no test! But dying there would be so easy. And Sophy Lennox would never forbid it. She would take me in, and lay me on her bed, and bury me—like a good woman. I am not unworthy of it. I am not a bad woman, Jane.'

'Oh, Madam,' Jane cried, distracted, 'do you know the carriage is waiting all this time? And the people of the hotel will be frightened. Come back, for goodness' sake, come back!'

'The carriage,' she said, with a wondering air. 'Is it the Highcourt carriage, and are we going home?'

CHAPTER LXI.

THE day had come which Rosalind had looked forward to as the decisive moment—the day on which her life of submission was to be over, her independent action to begin. But to Rivers it was a day of almost greater import, the day on which he was to know, so far as she was concerned, what people call his fate. It was about noon when he set out from Aix, at a white heat of excitement, to know what was in store for him. He walked, scarcely conscious what he trod on, along the commonplace road; everything appeared to him as through a mist. His whole being was so absorbed in what was about to happen, that at the last his mind began to revolt against it. To put this power into the hands of a girl—a creature without experience or knowledge, though with all the charms which his heart recognised: to think that she, not much more than a child in comparison with himself, should thus have his fate in her hands, and keep his whole soul in suspense and be able to determine even the tenor of his life! It was monstrous, it was ridiculous, yet true. If he left Bonport accepted, his whole career would be altered; if not— There was a nervous tremor in him, a quiver of disquietude which he was not able to conquer. To talk of women as wanting votes or freedom, when they had in their hands such unreasonable, such ridiculous, such monstrous power as this! His mind revolted though his heart obeyed. She would not, it was possible, be herself aware of the full importance of the decision she was about to make; and yet upon that decision his whole existence would turn. A great deal has been said about the subduing power of

love, yet it was maddening to think that thus, in spite of reason and every dictate of good sense, the life of a man of high intelligence and mature mind should be at the disposal of a girl. Even while he submitted to that fate, he felt in his soul the revolt against it. To young Roland it was natural and beautiful that it should be so, but to Rivers it was not beautiful at all; it was an inconceivable weakness in human nature—a thing scarcely credible when you came to think of it. And yet, unreasonable as it was, he could not free himself or assert his own independence. He was almost glad of this indignant sentiment as he hurried along to know his fate. When he reached the terrace which surrounded the house, looking back before he entered, he saw young Everard coming in at the gate below with an enormous bouquet in his hand. What were the flowers for? Did the fool mean to propitiate her with flowers? or had he, good heavens, was it possible to conceive that he had, acquired a right to bring presents to Rosalind? This idea seemed to fill his veins with fire. The next moment he had entered into the calm of the house, which, so far as external appearances went, was so orderly, so quiet, thrilled by no excitement. He could have borne noise and confusion better. The stillness seemed to take away his breath.

And in another minute Rosalind was standing before him. She came so quickly that she must have been looking for him. There was an alarmed look in her eyes, and she too seemed breathless as if her heart was beating more quickly than usual. Her lips were apart as if already in her mind she had begun to speak, not waiting for any question from him. All this meant, must mean, a participation in his excitement. What was she going to say to him? It was in the drawing-room, the common sitting-room, with its windows open to the terrace, whence any one wandering about looking at the view, as every fool did, might step in at any moment and interrupt the conference. All this he was conscious of instantaneously, finding material in it both for the wild hope and the fierce despite which had been raging in him all the morning—to think not only that his fate was in this girl's hands, but that any vulgar interruption, any impudent caller might interfere! And yet what did that matter if all was to go well?

'Mr. Rivers,' Rosalind said at once, with an eagerness which was full of agitation, 'I have asked you to come—to tell you. I am afraid you will be angry. I almost think you have reason to be angry. I want to tell you: it has not been my fault.'

He felt himself drop down from vague sunlit heights of expectation down, down, to the end of all things, to cold and outer darkness, and looked at her blankly in the sternness and paleness of a disappointment all the greater that he had said to himself he was prepared for the worst. He had hoped to cheat fate by arming himself with that conviction; but it did not stand

him in much stead. It was all he could do to speak steadily, to keep down the impulse of rising rage. ‘This beginning,’ he said, ‘Miss Trevanion, does not seem very favourable.’

‘Oh, Mr. Rivers! If I give you pain I hope you will forgive me. Perhaps I have been thoughtless—I have so much to think of, so much that has made me unhappy—and now it has all come to a crisis.’

Rivers felt that the smile with which he tried to receive this, and reply to her deprecating anxious looks, was more like a scowl than a smile. ‘If this is so,’ he said, ‘I could not hope that my small affair should dwell in your mind.’

‘Oh, do not say so. If I have been thoughtless it is not—it is not,’ cried Rosalind, contradicting herself in her haste, ‘for want of thought. And when I tell you I have made up my mind, that is scarcely what I mean. It is rather that one thing has taken possession of me, that I cannot help myself. If you will let me tell you—’

‘Tell me that you have resolved to make another man happy and not me? That is very gracious, condescending,’ he cried, scarcely able to keep control of himself; ‘but perhaps, Miss Trevanion—’

‘It is not that,’ she cried, ‘it is not that. It is something which it will take a long time to tell.’ She came nearer to him as she spoke, and putting out her hand touched his arm timidly. The agitation in his face filled her with grief and self-reproach. ‘Oh,’ she said, ‘forgive me if I have given you pain! When you spoke to me at the Elms, you would not let me answer you: and when you came here my mind was full—oh, full—so that I could not think of anything else.’

He broke into a harsh laugh. ‘You do me too much honour, Miss Trevanion, perhaps I am not worthy of it. A story of love when it is not one’s own is—— Bah! what a savage I am! and you so kindly condescending, so sorry to give me pain! Perhaps,’ he cried, more and more losing the control of himself, ‘you may think it pleasant to drag a man like me at your chariot wheels for a year: but I scarcely see the jest. You think perhaps that for a man to stake his life on the chance of a girl’s favour is nothing—that to put all one’s own plans aside, to postpone everything, to suspend one’s being—for the payment of—a smile——’ He paused for breath. He was almost beside himself with the sense of wrong—the burning and bitterness that was in his mind. He had a right to speak; a man could not thus be trifled with and the woman escape scot free.

Rosalind stood, looking at him, turning from red to pale, alarmed, bewildered, overcome. How was she, a girl hemmed in by all the precautions of gentle life, to know what was in the heart of a man in the bitterness of his disappointment and humiliation? Sorry to have given him pain! that was all she

had thought of. But it had never occurred to her that the pain might turn to rage and bitterness, and that instead of the pathos of a rejected lover, she might find herself face to face with the fury of a man who felt himself outraged, and to whom it had been a matter of resentment even that she, a slight girl, should have the disposal of his fate. She turned away to leave him without a word. But feeling something in her that must be spoken, she paused a moment, holding her head high.

'I think you have forgotten yourself,' she said; 'but that is for you to judge. You have mistaken me, however, altogether, all through. What I meant to explain to you was something different—oh, very different. But there is no longer any room for that. And I think we have said enough to each other, Mr. Rivers.' He followed her as she turned towards the door. He could not let her go, neither for love nor for hate. And by this time he began to see that he had gone too far: he followed her, entreating her to pause a moment, in a changed and trembling voice. But just then there occurred an incident which brought all his fury back. Young Everard, whom he had seen on the way, and whose proceedings were so often awkward, without perception, instead of entering in the ordinary way, had somehow strayed on to the terrace with his bouquet, perhaps because no one had answered his summons at the door, perhaps from a foolish hope that he might be allowed to enter by the window, as Mrs. Lennox, in her favour for him, had sometimes permitted him to do. He now came in sight, hesitating, in front of the open window. Rosalind was too much excited to think of ordinary rules. She was so annoyed and startled by his appearance, that she made a sudden imperative movement of her hand, waving him away. It was made in utter intolerance of his intrusion, but it seemed to Rivers like the private signal of a mutual understanding too close for words, as the young fellow's indiscretion appeared to him the evidence of privileges only to be accorded to a successful lover. He stopped short with the prayer for pardon on his lips, and, bursting once more into a fierce laugh of fury, cried, 'Ah, here we have the explanation at last!'

Rosalind made no reply. She gave him a look of supreme indignation and scorn, and left him without a word—left him in possession of the field—with the other, the accepted one, the favoured lover—good heavens! standing, hesitating, in his awkward way, a shadow against the light. Rivers had come to a point at which the power of speech fails. It was all he could do to keep himself from seizing the bouquet and flinging it into the lake, and the bearer after it. But what was the use? If she indeed loved this fellow, there could be nothing further said. He turned round with furious impatience, and flung open the door into the ante-room—to find himself, breathing fire and flame as he was, and bearing every sign of his agitation in his face, in

the midst of the family party streaming in from different quarters, for luncheon, all in their ordinary guise. For luncheon ! at such a moment, when the mere outside appearances of composure seemed impossible to him, and his blood was boiling in his veins.

'Why, here is Rivers,' said John Trevanion, 'at a good moment ; we are just going to lunch, as you see.'

'And I am going away from Aix,' said Rivers, with a sharpness which he felt to be like a gun of distress.

'Going away ! that is sudden ; but so much the more reason to sit down with us once more. Come, we can't let you go.'

'Oh no, impossible to let you go, Mr. Rivers, without saying good-bye,' said the mellow voice of Mrs. Lennox. 'What a good thing we all arrived in time ! The children and Rosalind would have been so disappointed to miss you. And though we are away from home, and cannot keep it as we ought, this is a little kind of feast, you know, for it is Rosalind's birthday ; so you must stay and drink her health. Oh, and here is Mr. Everard too. Tell him to put two more places directly, Sophy. And how did you know it was Rosalind's birthday, Mr. Everard ? What a magnificent bouquet ! Come in, come in ; we cannot let you go. You must drink Rosalind's health on such an important day.'

Rivers obeyed, as in a dream ; he was exhausted with his outbreak, remorseful, beginning to wonder whether, after all, *that* was the explanation ? Rosalind came in alone after the rest. She was very pale, as if she had suffered too, and very grave ; not a smile on her face in response to all the smiles around. For notwithstanding the excitement and distress in the house, the family party on the surface was cheerful enough, smiling youthfulness and that regard for appearances which is second nature carrying it through. The dishes were handed round as usual, a cheerful din of talk arose ; Rex had an appetite beyond all satisfaction, and even John Trevanion—ill-timed as it all seemed—bore a smiling face. As for Mrs. Lennox, her voice ran on with scarcely a pause, skimming over those depths with which she was totally unacquainted. 'And are you really going away, Mr. Rivers ?' she said. 'Dear me, I am very sorry. How we shall miss you ! Don't you think we shall miss Mr. Rivers dreadfully, Rosalind ? But to be sure you must want to see your own people, and you must have a great deal of business to attend to after being so long away. We are going home ourselves very soon. Eh ! What is that ? Who is it ? What are you saying, John ? Oh ! some message for Rosalind, I suppose.'

There was a commotion at the further end of the room, the servants attempting to restrain some one who forced her way in, in spite of them, calling loudly upon John Trevanion. It was Russell flushed and wild—in her outdoor clothes, her bonnet half falling off her head, held by the strings only, her cloak dropping from her shoulders. She pushed her way forward to John Trevanion

at the foot of the table. ‘Mr. John,’ she cried, panting, ‘I’ve got on the track of her! I told you it was no ghost. I’ve got on the tracks of her; and there’s some here could tell you more than me.’

‘What is she talking about? Oh, I think the woman must have gone mad, John! She thinks since we brought her here that she may say anything. Send her away, send her away!’

‘I’ll not be sent away,’ cried Russell. ‘I’ve come to do my duty to the children, and I’ll do it. Mr. John, I tell you I am on her tracks, and there’s two gentlemen here that can tell you all about her. Two, the young one and another. Didn’t I tell you?’ The woman was intoxicated with her triumph. ‘That one with the grey hair, that’s a little more natural, like her own age—and this one,’ cried the excited woman sharply, striking Everard on the shoulder, ‘that ran off with her. And everything I ever said is proved true.’

Rivers rose to his feet instinctively as he was pointed out, and stood asking with wonder, ‘What is it? What does she mean? What have I done?’ Everard, who had turned round sharply when he was touched, kept his seat, throwing a quick, suspicious glance round him. John Trevanion had risen too, and so did Rex, who seized his former nurse by the arm, and tried to drag her away. The boy was furious. ‘Be off with you, you—or I’ll drag you out,’ he cried, crimson with passion.

At this moment, when the whole party was in commotion, the wheels of a carriage sounded in the midst of the tumult outside, and a loud knocking was heard at the door.

CHAPTER LXII.

IT was difficult to explain the impulse which drew them one after another into the ante-room. On ordinary occasions it would have been the height of bad manners; and there was no reason, so far as the most of the company knew, why common laws should be postponed to the exigencies of the occasion. John Trevanion hurried out first of all, and Rosalind after him, making no apology. Then Mrs. Lennox, with a troubled face, put forth her excuses—‘I am sure I beg your pardon, but as they seem to be expecting somebody, perhaps I had better go and see—’ Sophy, who had devoured Russell’s communications with eyes dancing with excitement, had slipped from her seat at once and vanished. Rex, with a moody face and his hands in his pockets, strolled to the door, and stood there, leaning against the opening, divided between curiosity and disgust. The three men who were rivals alone remained, looking uneasily at one another. They were all standing up, an embarrassed group, enemies, yet driven together by stress

of weather. Everard was the first to move; he tried to find an outlet, looking stealthily from one door to another.

'Don't you think,' he said at last, in a tremulous voice, 'that if there is—any family bother—we had better—go away?'

'I suppose,' said Roland Hamerton, with white lips, 'it must be something about Mrs. Trevanion.' And he too pushed forward into the ante-room, too anxious to think of politeness, anxious beyond measure to know what Rosalind was about to do.

A little circular hall, with a marble floor, was between this ante-room and the door. The sound of the carriage driving up, the knocking, the little pause while a servant hurried through to open, gave time for all these secondary proceedings. Then there was again an interval of breathless expectation. Mrs. Lennox's travelling servant was a stranger, who knew nothing of the family history. He preceded the newcomer with silent composure, directing his steps to the drawing-room; but when he found that all the party had silently thronged into the ante-room, he made a formal pause halfway. No consciousness was in his unfaltering tones. He drew his feet into the right attitude, and then he announced the name that fell among them like a thunderbolt—'Mrs. Trevanion'—at the top of a formal voice.

She stood upon the threshold without advancing, her black veil thrown back, her black dress hanging in heavy folds about her worn figure, her face very pale, tremulous with a pathetic smile. She was holding fast by Jane with one hand to support herself. She seemed to stand there for an indefinite time, detached and separated from everything but the shadow of her maid behind her, looking at them all, on the threshold of the future, on the verge of the past; but in reality it was only for a moment. Before, in fact, they had time to breathe, a great cry rang through the house, and Rosalind flung herself, precipitated herself, upon the woman whom she adored. 'Mother!' It rang through every room, thrilling the whole house from its foundations, and going through and through the anxious spectators, to whom were now added a circle of astonished servants, eager, not knowing what was happening. Mrs. Trevanion received the shock of this young life suddenly flung upon her with a momentary tottering, and, but for Jane behind her, might have fallen, even as she put forth her arms and returned the vehement embrace. Their faces met, their heads lay together for a moment, their arms closed upon each other, there was that murmur without words, of infinite love, pain, joy, undistinguishable. Then, while Rosalind still clasped and clung to her, without relaxing a muscle, holding fast as death what she had thus recovered, Mrs. Trevanion raised her head and looked round her. Her eyes were wistful, full of a yearning beyond words. Rosalind was here, but where were the others, her own, the children of her bosom? Rex stood in the doorway, red and lowering, his brows drawn down over his eyes, his

shoulders up to his ears, a confused and uneasy embarrassment in every line of his figure. He said not a word, he looked straight before him, not at her. Sophy had got behind a curtain, and was peering out, her restless eyes twinkling and moving, her small figure concealed behind the drapery. The mother looked wistfully out over the head of Rosalind lying on her bosom, supporting the girl with her arms, holding her close, yet gazing, gazing, making a passionate, pathetic appeal to her very own. Was there to be no reply? Even on the instant there was a reply; a door was flung open, something white flashed across the ante-room, and added itself like a little line of light to the group formed by the two women. Oh, happiness that overflows the heart! Oh misery that cuts it through like a knife! Of all that she had brought into the world, little Amy alone!

'My mistress is not able to bear it. I told her she was not able to bear it. Let her sit down. Bring something for her; that chair, that chair! Have pity upon her!' cried Jane, with urgent vehement tones, which roused them from the half-stupefaction with which the whole bewildered assembly was gazing. John Trevanion was the first to move, and with him Roland Hamerton. The others all stood by looking on; Rivers with the interest of a spectator at a tragedy, the others with feelings so much more personal and such a chaos of recollections and alarms. The two who had started forward to succour her put Mrs. Trevanion reverently into the great chair; John with true affection and anguish, Roland with a wondering reverence which the first glance of her face, so altered and pale, had impressed upon him. Then Mrs. Lennox hustled forward, wringing her hands; how she had been restrained hitherto nobody ever knew.

'Oh, Grace, Grace! oh, my poor Grace! oh, how ill she is looking! Oh, my dear, my dear, haven't you got a word for me? Oh, Grace, where have you been all this time, and why didn't you come to me? And how could you distrust me, or think I ever believed, or imagine I wasn't your friend! Grace, my poor dear! Oh, Jane, is it a faint? What is it? Who has got a fan? or some wine. Bring some wine! Oh, Jane, tell us, can't you tell us, what we ought to do?'

'Nothing,' said Mrs. Trevanion, rousing herself; 'nothing, Sophy. I knew you were kind always. It is only—a little too much—and I have not been well. John—oh, yes, that is quite easy—comfortable. Let me rest for a moment, and then I will tell you what I have come to say.'

They were all silent for that brief interval; even Mrs. Lennox did nothing but wring her hands; and those who were most concerned became like the rest, spectators of the tragedy. Little Amy, kneeling, half thrown across her mother's lap, made a spot of light upon the black dress with her light streaming hair. Rosalind stood upright, very upright, by the side of the mother whom she

had found again, confronting all the world in a high, indignant championship, which was so strangely contrasted with the quiet wistfulness and almost satisfaction in the face of the woman by whom she stood. Jane, very anxious, watching every movement, her attention concentrated upon her mistress, stood behind the chair.

When Mrs. Trevanion opened her eyes she smiled. John Trevanion stood by her on one side, Rosalind on the other. She had no lack of love, of sympathy, or friendship. She looked from between them over Amy's bright head with a quivering of her lips. 'Oh, no test, no test!' she said to herself. She had known how it would be. She withdrew her eyes from the boy standing gloomy in the doorway. She began to speak, and everybody but he made some unconscious movement of quickened attention. Rex did not give any sign, nor one other, standing behind, half hidden by the door.

'Sophy,' she said quietly, 'I have always had the fullest trust in your kindness; and if I come to your house on Rosalind's birthday that can hurt no one. This dreadful business has been going on too long—too long. Flesh and blood cannot bear it. I have grown very weak—in mind, I mean in mind. When I heard the children were near me, I yielded to the temptation and went to look at them. And all this has followed. Perhaps it was wrong. My mind has got confused; I don't know.'

'Oh, Grace, my dear, how could it be wrong to look at your little children, your own children, whom you were so cruelly, cruelly parted from?'

Mrs. Lennox began to cry. She adopted her sister-in-law's cause in a moment, without hesitation or pause. Her different opinion before mattered nothing now. Mrs. Trevanion understood all and smiled, and looked up at John Trevanion, who stood by her with his hand upon the chair, very grave, his face full of pain, saying nothing. He was a friend whom she had never doubted, and yet was it not his duty to enforce the separation, as it had been his to announce it to her?

'I know,' she cried, 'and I know what is your duty, John. Only I have a hope that something may come which will make it your duty no longer. But in the meantime I have changed my mind about many things. I thought it best before to go away without any explanations; I want now to tell you everything.'

Rosalind clasped her hand more closely. 'Dear mother, what you please: but not because we want explanations,' she said, her eyes including the whole party in one high, defiant gaze.

'Oh no, dear, no. We want nothing but just to enjoy your society a little,' cried Mrs. Lennox. 'Give dear Grace your arm, and bring her into the drawing-room, John. Explanations! No, no! If there is anything that is disagreeable, let it just be forgotten. We are all friends now; indeed we have always been friends,' the good woman cried.

'I want to tell you how I left home,' Mrs. Trevanion said. She turned to her brother-in-law, who was stooping over the back of her chair, his face partially concealed. 'John, you were right, yet you were all wrong. In those terrible evenings at Highecourt'—she gave a slight shudder—'I did indeed go night after night to meet—a man in the wood. When I went away I went with him, to make up to him—the man, poor boy! he was scarcely more than a boy—was—' She paused, her eye caught by a strange combination. It brought the keenest pang of misery to her heart, yet made her smile. Everard had been drawn by the intense interest of the scene into the room. He stood in the doorway close to young Rex, who leant against it, looking out under the same lowering brows, in the same attitude of sullen resistance. She gazed at them for a moment with sad certainty, and yet a wonder never to be extinguished. 'There,' she said, with a keen sharpness of anguish in her voice, 'they stand together; look and you will see. My sons—both mine—and neither with anything in his heart that speaks for me!'

These words, and the unconscious group in the doorway who were the only persons in the room unaffected by what was said, threw a sudden illumination upon the scene and the story and everything that had been. A strange thrill ran through the company as every individual turned round and gazed, and perceived, and understood. Mrs. Lennox gave a sudden cry, clasping her hands together, and Rosalind, who was holding Mrs. Trevanion's hand, gave it such a sudden pressure, emphatic, almost violent, that the sufferer moved involuntarily with the pain. John Trevanion raised his head from where he had been leaning on her chair. He took in everything with a glance. Was it an older Rex, less assured, less arrogant, but not less determined to resist all softening influences? But the effect on John was not that of an explanation, but of an alarming, horrifying discovery. He withdrew from Mrs. Trevanion's chair. A tempest of wonder and fear arose in his mind. The two in the doorway moved uneasily under the observation to which they were suddenly subjected. They gave each other a naturally defiant glance. Neither of them realised the revelation that had been made, not even Everard, though he knew it—not Rex, listening with jealous repugnance, resisting all the impulses of nature. Neither of them understood the wonderful effect that was produced upon the others by the sight of them standing side by side.

John Trevanion had suddenly taken up a new position; no one knew why he spoke in harsh distinct tones, altogether unlike his usual friendly and gentle voice. 'Let us know, now, exactly what this means: and, for God's sake, no further concealment, no evasion. Speak out for that poor boy's sake.'

There was surprise in Mrs. Trevanion's eyes as she raised them to his face. 'I have come to tell you everything,' she said.

'Sir,' said Jane, 'my poor lady is far from strong. Before she says more and brings on one of her faints, let her rest—oh, let her rest.'

For once in his life John Trevanion had no pity. 'Her faints,' he said; 'does she faint? Bring wine, bring something; but I must understand this, whatever happens. It is a matter of life or death.'

'Uncle John,' said Rosalind, 'I will not have her disturbed. Whatever there is amiss can be told afterwards. I am here to take care of her. She shall not do more than she is able for; no, not even for you.'

'Rosalind, are you mad? Don't you see what hangs upon it? Reginald's position—everything, perhaps. I must understand what she means. I must understand what *that* means.' John Trevanion's face was utterly without colour; he could not stand still—he was like a man on the rack. 'I must know everything, and instantly; for how can she stay here, unless— She must not stay.'

This discussion, and his sharp unhappy tone, seemed to call Madam to herself.

'I did not faint,' she said, softly. 'It is a mistake to call them faints. I was never unconscious; and surely, Rosalind, he has a right to know. I have come to explain everything.'

Roland Hamerton had been standing behind. He came close to Rosalind's side. 'Madam,' he said, 'if you are not to stay here, wherever I have a house, wherever I can give you a shelter, it is yours; whatever I can do for you, from the bottom of my heart!'

Mrs. Trevanion opened her eyes, which had been closed. She shook her head very softly; and then she said almost in a whisper, 'Rosalind, he is very good and honest and true. I should be glad if— And, Amy, my darling! you must go and get dressed. You will catch cold. Go, my love, and then come back to me. I am ready, John. I want to make everything clear.'

Rosalind held her hand fast. She stood like a sentinel facing them all, her left hand clasping Mrs. Trevanion's, the other free, as if in defence of her. And Roland stood close behind, ready to answer any call. He was of Madam's faction against all the world, the crowd (as it seemed to these young people), before whom she was about to make her defence. These two wanted no defence; neither did Mrs. Lennox, standing in front wringing her hands, with her honest face full of trouble, following everything that each person said. 'She is more fit to be in her bed than anywhere else,' Mrs. Lennox was saying; 'she is as white—as white as my handkerchief. Oh, John, you that are so reasonable, and that always were a friend to her—how can you be so cruel to her? She shall stay,' cried Aunt Sophy, with a sudden outburst, 'in my house—I suppose it is my house—as long as she will consent to stay.'

Notwithstanding this, of all the people present there was no one who in his heart had stood by her so closely as John Trevanian. But circumstances had so determined it that he must be her judge now. He made a pause, and then pointed to the doorway in which the two young men stood with a mutual scowl at each other. ‘Explain that,’ he said, in sharp staccato tones, ‘first of all.’

‘Yes, John, I will explain,’ Mrs. Trevanian said, with humility. ‘When I met my husband first——’ She paused as if to take breath—‘I was married, and I had a child. I feel no shame now,’ she went on, yet with a faint colour rising over her paleness. ‘Shame is over for me: I must tell my story without evasion, as you say. It is this, John. I thought I was a deserted wife, and my boy had a right to his name. The same ship that brought Reginald Trevanian, brought the news that I was deceived. I was left in a strange country without a friend—a woman who was no wife, with a child who had no father. I thought I was the most miserable of women; but now I know better. I know now——’

John’s countenance changed at once. What he had feared or suspected was never known to any of them: but his aspect changed; he tried to interrupt her, and coming back to her side, took her other hand. ‘Grace,’ he cried, ‘Grace! it is enough. I was a brute to think—Grace, my poor sister——’

‘Thank you, John; but I have not done. Your father,’ she went on, unconsciously changing, addressing another audience, ‘saw me, and heard my story. And he was sorry for me—oh, he was more than sorry. He was young, and so was I. He proposed to me after a while that if I would give up my boy—and we had no living, nothing to keep us from starvation—and marry him, he would take care of the child; it should want for nothing, but that I must never see it more. For a long time I could not make up my mind. But poverty is very sharp; and how to get bread I knew not. The child was pining, and so was I. And I was young. I suppose,’ she said in a low voice, drooping her head, ‘I still wished, still needed to be happy. That seems so natural when one is young. And your father loved me: and I him—and I him!’

She said these words very low, with a pause between. ‘There, you have all my story,’ with a glimmer of a smile on her face. ‘It is a tragedy, but simple enough, after all. I was never to see the child again; but my heart betrayed me, and I deceived your father. I went and—looked at my boy out of windows, waited to see him pass—once met him on a railway journey when you were with me, Rosalind—which was all wrong, wrong—oh, wrong on both sides: to your father and to him. I don’t excuse myself. Then, poor boy, he fell into trouble. How could he help it? His father’s blood was in him, and mine too—a woman false to my vow. He was without friend or home. When he was in great need and alarm, he came—was it not natural?—to his mother.

What could be more natural? He sent for me to meet him, to help him, to tell him what to do. What could I do but go—all being so wrong, so wrong? Jane knows everything. I begged my poor boy to go away; but he was ignorant, he did not know the danger. And then Russell, you know, who had never loved me—is she there, poor woman?—found us out. She carried this story to your father. You think, and she thinks,' said Mrs. Trevanion, raising herself with great dignity in her chair, 'that my husband suspected me of—of—I cannot tell what shameful suspicions. Reginald,' she went on, with a smile half scornful, 'had no such thought. He knew me better. He knew I went to meet my son, and that I was risking everything for my son. He had vowed to me that in that case I should be cut off from him and his. Oh, yes, I knew it all. My eyes were open all the time. And he did what he had said.' She drew a long breath. There was a dispassionate sadness in her voice, as of winding up a history all past. 'And what was I to do?' she resumed. 'Cut off from all the rest, there was a chance that I might yet be of some use to him—my boy whom I had neglected. Oh, John and Rosalind, I wrunged *you*. I should have told you this before: but I had not the heart. And then, there was no time to lose, if I was to be of service to the boy.'

Everything was perfectly still in the room; no one had stirred; they were afraid to lose a word. When she had thus ended she made a pause. Her voice had been very calm, deliberate, a little feeble, with pauses in it. When she spoke again it took another tone: it was full of entreaty, like a prayer. She withdrew her hand from Rosalind.

'Reginald!' she said, 'Rex! have you nothing to say to me, my boy?'

The direction of all eyes was changed and turned upon the lad. He stood very red, very lowering, without moving from his post against the door. He did not look at her. After a moment he began to clear his voice. 'I don't know,' he said, 'what there is to say.' Then after another pause: 'I suppose I am expected to stick to my father's will. I suppose that's my duty.'

'But for all that,' she said, with a pleading which went to every heart; her eyes filled, which had been quite dry, her mouth quivered with a tender smile—'for all that, oh, my boy! it is not to take me in, to make a sacrifice: but for once speak to me, come to me; I am your mother, Rex.'

Sophy had been behind the curtain all the time, wrapped in it, peering out with her restless, dancing eyes. She was still only a child. Her little bosom had begun to ache with sobs kept in, her face to work, her mind to be moved by impulses beyond her power. She had tried to mould herself upon Rex, until Rex, with the shadow of the other beside him, holding back, repelling,

resisting, became contemptible in Sophy's keen eyes. It was perhaps this touch of the ridiculous that affected her sharp mind more than anything else ; and the sound of her mother's voice as it went on speaking was more than nature could bear, and roused impulses she scarcely understood within her. She resisted as long as she could, winding herself up in the curtain ; but at these last words Sophy's bonds were loosed ; she shook herself out of the drapery and came slowly forward, with eyes glaring red out of her pale face.

'They say,' she said suddenly, 'that we shall lose all our money, mamma, if we go to you.'

Mrs. Trevanion's fortitude and calm had given way. She was not prepared for this trial. She turned towards the new voice and held out her arms without a word. But Sophy stood frightened, reluctant, anxious, her keen eyes darting out of her head.

'And what could I do ?' she cried. 'I am only a little thing, I couldn't work. If you gave up your baby because of being poor, what should we do, Rex and I ? We are younger, though you said you were young. We want to be well off too. If we were to go to you, everything would be taken from us !' cried Sophy. 'Mamma, what can we do ?'

Mrs. Trevanion turned to her supporters on either side of her with a smile ; her lips still trembled. 'Sophy was always of a logical mind,' she said with a faint half-laugh. The light was flickering round her, blackness coming where all these eager faces were. 'I—I have my answer. It is just enough. I have no—complaint.'

There was a sudden outcry and commotion where all had been so still before. Jane came from behind the chair and swept away, with that command which knowledge gives, the little crowd which had closed in around. 'Air ! air is what she wants, and to be quiet ! Go away, for God's sake, all but Miss Rosalind !'

John Trevanion hurried to open the window, and the faithful servant wheeled the chair close to it in which her mistress lay. Just then two other little actors came upon the scene. Amy had obeyed her mother literally. She had gone and dressed with that calm acceptance of all wonders which is natural to childhood ; then sought her little brother at play in the nursery. 'Come and see mamma,' she said. Without any surprise Johnny obeyed. He had his whip in his hand, which he flourished as he came into the open space which had been cleared round that chair.

'Where's mamma ?' said Johnny. His eyes sought her among the people standing about. When his calm but curious gaze found out the fainting figure, he shook his hand free from that of Amy, who led him. 'That !' he said, contemptuously ; 'that's not mamma, that's the lady.'

Against the absolute certainty of his tone there was nothing to be said.

CHAPTER LXIII.

RIVERS had stood listening all through this strange scene, he scarcely knew why. He was roused now to the inappropriateness of his presence here. What had he to do in the midst of a family tragedy with which he had no connection? His heart contracted with one sharp spasm of pain. He had no connection with the Trevanions. He looked round him, half contemptuous of himself, for some one of whom he could take leave before he closed the door of this portion of his life behind him and left it for ever. There was no one. All the different elements were drawn together in the one central interest with which the stranger had nothing to do. Rivers contemplated the group around Mrs. Trevanion's chair as if it had been a picture. The drama was over, and all had resolved itself into stillness, whether the silence of death, or a pause only and interruption of the continuity, he could not tell. He looked round him, unconsciously receiving every detail into his mind. This was what he had given a year of his life for, to leave this household with which he had so strongly identified himself without even a word of farewell and to see them no more. He lingered only for a moment, the lines of the picture biting themselves in upon his heart. When he felt it to be so perfect that no after experience could make it dim, he went away, Roland Hamerton following him to the door. Hamerton, on his side, very much shaken by the agitating scene, to which his inexperience knew no parallel, was eager to speak to some one, to relieve his heart.

'Do you think she is dead?' he said under his breath.

'Death, in my experience, rarely comes so easily,' Rivers replied. After a pause he added, 'I am going away to-night. I suppose you remain?'

'If I can be of any use. You see I have known them all my life.'

'There you have the advantage of me,' said the other sharply, with a sort of laugh. 'I have given them only a year of mine. Good-bye, Hamerton. Our way—does not lie the same—'

'Good-bye,' said Roland, taken by surprise, and stopping short, though he had not meant to do so. Then he called after him with a kindly impulse, 'We shall be sure to hear of you. Good luck! Good-bye.'

Good luck! The words seemed an insult; but they were not so meant. Rivers sped on, never looking back. At the gate he made up to Everard, walking with his head down and his hands in his pockets, in gloomy discomfiture. His appearance moved Rivers to a kind of inward laugh. There was no triumph, at least, in him.

'You have come away without knowing if your mother will live or die.'

'What's the use of waiting on?' said young Everard. 'She'll be all right. They are only faints; all women have them; they are nothing to be frightened about.'

'I think they are a great deal to be frightened about—very likely she will never leave that house alive.'

'Oh, stuff!' Everard said; and then he added half apologetically, 'You don't know her as I do.'

'Perhaps better than you do,' said Rivers; and then he added, as he had done to Hamerton, 'Our ways lie in different directions. Good-bye. I am leaving Aix to-night.'

Everard looked after him surprised. He had no good wishes to speak, as Roland had. A sense of pleasure at having got rid of an antagonist was in his mind. For his mind was of the calibre which is not aware when there comes an end. All life to him was a ragged sort of thread, going on vaguely without any logic in it. He was conscious that a great deal had happened, and that the day had been full of excitement; but how it was to affect his life he did not know.

Thus the three rivals parted. They had not been judged on their merits, but the competition was over. He who was nearest to the prize felt, like the others, his heart and courage very low; for he had not succeeded in what he had attempted; he had done nothing to bring about the happy termination; and whether even that termination was to be happy or not, as yet no one could say.

CHAPTER LXIV.

MADAM was conveyed with the greatest care and tenderness to the best room in the house, Mrs. Lennox's own room, which it was a great satisfaction to that kind soul to give up to her, making the little sacrifice with joy.

'I have always thought what a nice room to be ill in—don't you think it is a nice room, Grace?—and to get better in, my dear. You can step into the fresh air at once as soon as you are strong enough, and there is plenty of room for us all to come and sit with you; and, please God, we'll soon have you well again and everything comfortable,' cried Mrs. Lennox, her easy tears flowing softly, her easy words rolling out like them. Madam accepted everything with soft thanks and smiles, and a quiet ending seemed to fall quite naturally to the agitated day. Rosalind spent the night by her mother's bedside—the long, long night that seemed as if it never would be done. When at last it was over, the morning made everything more hopeful. A famous doctor, who happened to be in the neighbourhood, came with a humbler brother from Aix and examined the patient, and said she had no disease—no disease—only no wish or intention of

living. Rosalind's heart bounded at the first words, but fell again at the end of the sentence which these men of science said very gravely. As for Mrs. Trevanion, she smiled at them all, and made no complaint. All the day she lay there, sometimes lapsing into that momentary death which she would not allow to be called a faint, then coming back again, smiling, talking by intervals. The children did not tire her, she said. Little Johnny, accustomed to the thought that 'the lady' was mamma, accepted it as quite simple, and, returning to his usual occupations, drove a coach and four made of chairs in her room, to her perfect satisfaction and his. The cracking of his whip did not disturb her. Neither did Amy, who sat on her bed, and forgot her troubles, and sang a sort of ditty, of which the burden was 'Mamma has come back.' Sophy, wandering long about the door of the room, at last came in too, and, standing at a distance, stared at her mother with those sharp restless eyes of hers, like one who was afraid to be infected if she made too near an approach. And later in the afternoon Reginald came suddenly in, shamefaced and gloomy, and came up to the bed, and kissed her, almost without looking at her. At other times, Mrs. Trevanion was left alone with her brother-in-law and Rosalind, who understood her best, and talked to them with animation and what seemed to be pleasure.

'Rosalind will not see,' she said with a smile, 'that there comes a time when dying is the most natural—the most easy way of settling everything—the most pleasant for every one concerned.' There was no solemnity in her voice, though now and then it broke, and there were pauses for strength. She was the only one of the three who was cheerful and at ease. 'If I were so ill-advised as to live,' she added with a faint laugh, 'nothing could be changed. The past, you allow, has become impossible, Rosalind; I could not go away again. That answered for once, but not again.'

'You would be with me, mother, or I with you; for I am free, you know—I am free now.'

Mrs. Trevanion shook her head. 'John,' she said, 'tell her; she is too young to understand of herself. Tell her that this is the only way to cut the knot—that it is the best way—the most pleasant—John, tell her.'

He was standing by with his head bent upon his breast. He made a hasty sign with his hand. He could not have spoken to save his own life, or even hers. It was all intolerable, past bearing. He stood and listened, with sometimes an outcry—sometimes, alas! a dreadful consent in his heart to what she said, but he could not speak.

The conviction that now is the moment to die, that death is the most natural, noble, even agreeable way of solving a great problem, and making the path clear not only for the individual most closely concerned, but for all around, is not unusual in

life. Both in the greater historical difficulties, and in those which belong to private story, it appears often that this would be the better way. But the conviction is not always sufficient to carry itself out. Sometimes it will so happen that he or she in whose person the difficulty lies will so prevail over flesh and blood, so exalt the logic of the situation, as to attain this easy solution of the problem. But not in all cases does it succeed. Madam proved to be one of those who fail. Though she had so clearly made out what was expedient, and so fully consented to it, the force of her fine organisation was such that she was constrained to live, and could not die.

And, what was more wonderful still, from the moment when she entered Mrs. Lennox's room at Bonport, the problem seemed to dissolve itself and flee away in unsubstantial vapour-wreaths like a mist, as if it were no problem at all. One of the earliest posts brought a black-edged letter from England, announcing the death of Mr. Blake, the second executor of Reginald Trevanion's will, and John, with a start of half-incredulous wonder, found himself the only responsible authority in the matter. It had already been his determination to put it to the touch, to ascertain whether such a will would stand, even with the chilling doubt upon his mind that Mrs. Trevanion might not be able to explain the circumstances which involved her in suspicion. But now suddenly, miraculously, it became apparent to him that nothing need be done at all, no publicity given, no scandal made. For who was there to take upon him the odious office of reviving so odious an instrument? Who was to demand its observance? Who interfere with the matter if it dropped into contempt? The evil thing seemed to die and come to an end without any intervention. Its conditions had become a manifest impossibility—to be resisted to the death if need were: but there was no need; for had they not in a moment become no more than a dead letter? Might this have been from the beginning, and all the misery spared? As John Trevanion looked back upon it, asking himself this question, that terrible moment in the past seemed to him like a feverish dream. No one of the actors in it had preserved his or her self-command. The horror had been so great that it had taken their faculties from them, and Madam's sudden action, of which the reasons were only now apparent, had cut the ground from under the feet of the others, and forestalled all reasonable attempts to bring something better out of it. She had not been without blame. Her pride too had been in fault—her womanish haste, the precipitate measures which had made any better solution impossible. But now all that was over. Why should she die now that everything had become clear?

The circumstances got revealed to some extent in Aix among the English visitors who remained, and even to the ordinary population in a curious version, the point of the rumour being that the

mysterious English lady had died with the little somnambulist in her arms, who, it was hoped for the sake of sensation, had died too. This was the rumour that reached Everard's ears on the morning after, when he went to seek his mother in the back room she had inhabited at the hotel, and found no trace of her, but this legend to explain her absence. It had been hard to get at his heart, perhaps impossible by ordinary means; but this news struck him like a mortal blow. And his organisation was not like hers. He fell prostrate under it, and it was weeks before he got better and could be removed. The hands into which this weakling fell were nerveless but gentle hands. Aunt Sophy had 'taken to' him from the first, and he had always responded to her kindness. When he was able to go home she took 'Grace's boy' to her own house, where the climate was milder than at High-court; and by dint of a quite uncritical and undiscriminating affection, and perfect contentment with him as he was, in the virtue of his convalescence, did more to make of Edmund Everard a tolerable member of an unexacting society than his mother could ever have done. There are some natures for whose treatment it is well that their parents should be fools. It seems cruel to apply such a word to the kind but silly soul who had so much true bounty and affection in her. She and he gave each other a great deal of consolation and mutual advantage in the course of the years.

Russell had been, like Everard, incapable of supposing that the victim might die under their hands: and when all seemed to point to that certainty, the shock of shame and remorse helped to change the entire tenor of her life. She who had left the village triumphantly announcing herself as indispensable to the family and the children, could not return there in circumstances so changed. She married Mrs. Lennox's Swiss servant in haste, and thereafter spent her life in angry repentance. She now keeps a Pension in Switzerland, where her quality of Englishwoman is supposed to attract English visitors, and lays up her gains bitterly amid 'foreign ways,' which she tells any newcomer she cannot abide.

And Rosalind did what probably Mr. Ruskin's Rosiere, tired of her seven suitors, would in most cases do—escaping from the illusions of her own imagination and from the passion which had frightened her, fell back upon the steady faithful love, which had executed no hard task for her, done no heroic deed, but only loved her persistently, pertinaciously, through all. She married Roland Hamerton some months after they all returned home. And thus this episode of family history came to an end. Probably she would have done the same without any strain of compulsion had these calamities and changes never been.

THE END.

Poor Madam.

'The Donna.'

THE Editor has much pleasure in presenting to his readers the first statement of receipts and expenditure on account of the 'Donna.' The handsome balance still in the hands of the Sisters shows that the appeal to the readers of this magazine for a food truck to supply the out-of-work labourers in the neighbourhood of Tower Hill has been responded to in the most liberal manner. Of the whole sum of 260*l.* 10*s.* 11*d.* which has been spent between November 1st, 1883, and November 1st, 1884, 38*l.* may be put down to expenditure on capital account, viz. 20*l.* for the fitting up of the 'Donna' and 18*l.* for a new boiler at the workmen's restaurant in Dock Street, where the food is cooked. The actual working expenses chargeable to the year are therefore 222*l.* 10*s.* 11*d.* The sum of 86*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* has been received from the customers of the 'Donna,' thus showing a loss on the year's working of 156*l.* 4*s.* 5*d.* For this sum nearly 40,000 dinners have been provided to labourers who, without this timely assistance, could not have hoped to obtain a decent meal. The average number of customers has been near a hundred daily throughout the year. When it is remembered that besides the 'Donna' there are three other trucks which supply food to the unemployed in the East of London, it will be seen how great is the need, and what a determined effort the Sisters of Mercy are making to supply it. The number of men who have been served at the 'Donna' is of course vastly greater than the daily average. The 'Donna' is strictly a charity, a gift from those who have to those who are willing to work, to help them during their temporary need. Those who are in work within the docks are also supplied with good food at low prices through the kindly agency of the Sisters, but the prices they pay, though low, are sufficient to cover expenses. There are those who hold that the distribution of food below cost price is not desirable under any circumstances. They point to the workhouse, and say severely that if a man cannot earn his living and keep his wife and family from starvation he must become a pauper. Fortunately human mercy is less logical than are these strict economists. The timely aid offered by such agencies as that of the Sisters has saved many a family from this dire necessity, and, by helping him over bad times, has enabled many a man to preserve his self-respect. In administering a charity of this kind, great vigilance is necessary to guard against its abuse. It is impossible to prevent men in receipt of wages and idle loafers from applying for food at the 'Donna.' But the Sisters and their employés are very watchful for cases of this kind, and the unemployed workmen themselves help them in their determination to prevent the abuse of charity. The funds in the hands of the Sisters will enable them to carry on the work for nearly two years more—should the demand happily not increase—if no more contributions should come in. But the list published below of amounts received during the last month shows that money is coming in freely, and the Editor feels no doubt that funds will be forthcoming to carry on this work so long as it is needed. It is his ardent wish that the need for it may some day vanish.

'THE DONNA.'

Dr.	Cr.
1883-4	
Nov. 1 To Starting and fitting up to 'Donna'	£ s. d.
Dec. 22 Cost of food	20 0 0
Rent of ground for truck and shelter	21 0 0
Man's wages, at 16s. per week, for 7 weeks and 3 days	6 0 0
Two dozen pudding-tins	5 12 6
New boiler for making stew	1 2 0
Dec. 22 Rent of ground	18 0 0
to Cost of food	0 7 6
Mar. 1 Man's wages, 10 weeks	20 4 0
Repairing shelter and new pudding-tins	7 10 0
Mar. 1 Food	2 0 0
to Man's wages, 9 weeks	49 2 10
May 3 Rent of ground	6 15 0
Repairs	0 7 6
May 3 Cost of food	0 10 0
to Man's wages, 13 weeks	48 6 1
Aug. 2 Rent of ground	9 15 0
Aug. 2 Food	0 7 6
to Oct. 18 Man's wages, 11 weeks	34 0 0
Nov. 1 Standing for truck (empty)	8 5 0
	260 10 11
Balance	304 16 11
Total	565 7 10
	Total
	565 7 10

By Amount received for food sold at
the 'Donna'—

1883-4	£ s. d.
Nov. to Dec.	10 10 0
Dec. to March	10 2 0
March to May	24 11 5
May to August	24 3 1
August to Oct. 18	17 0 0
	86 6 6
Total of subscriptions received up to Oct. 16, 1884	479 1 4

The Editor begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following contributions:—

E. S. and E. A. R. 2*l.* T. W. (Walton-on-Naze) 5*s.* 6*d.* P. S. B. (Ipswich) 14*s.* 6*d.* F. G. 10*l.* J. B. 2*s.* 6*d.* (for 'Don' and 'Donna') J. F. 1*l.* M. A. H. L. 1*l.* Hermit 10*s.* N. E. Mavrogordato 10*s.* V. C. G. 10*s.* S. 1*l.* F. G. Waugh 1*l.* A. M. 5*s.* Somersethshire 5*s.* M. D. (Aberdeen) 5*s.* K. H. 10*s.* C. 3*s.* 6*d.* J. M. P. 12*s.* 6*d.* Young Ladies in Mrs. Stark's School, St. Andrew's, N. B., 10*s.* J. B. S. 10*s.* Miss Heaton 15*s.* for 'Donna,' 5*s.* for little James at Rotherhithe. A Reader 1*s.* for little James. Little Nell 1*l.* for little James. C. C. (Laurel Bank, Hemel Hempstead) 12*s.* Syd. A. Crimson 10*s.* (annual). F. and C. Edis 5*s.* J. B. (Nov. 25) 10*s.* A. B. 2*s.* M. Smith 1*l.* for 'Donna,' 1*l.* for the Sisters. Mrs. Mitchell, 'Don' 10*s.*, 'Donna' 10*s.* An Admirer of the late Ch. Lowder 5*s.* S. F. (Dalston) 3*s.* M. Cole 2*s.* 6*d.* Mrs. E. Chalk 1*l.* 'Don' and 1*l.* 'Donna.' Exon 2*s.* 6*d.* Miss Coall 10*s.* ('Don' and 'Donna'). Four Friends of Edinburgh and Dalkeith 6*s.* B. J. C. 10*s.* 'Don' and 10*s.* 'Donna.' Hon. Lady Elliot 2*l.* Miss Elliot 1*l.* J. G. Kershaw 3*l.* Miss Mayson 1*l.* Miss Esther Mayson 1*l.* C. W. Bourne 1*l.* 1*s.* Mrs. Ellis 1*l.* Miss Hasker 1*l.* 1*s.* Mrs. Legard 1*l.* A. C. 5*s.* L. C. 2*s.*

Contributions received on and after December 1 will be acknowledged in the next number.

Errata in December Number.

Page 149, line 10, for fold read lair

," line 17, delete full stop and add From earth to sky, on sea or shore.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor requests that his Correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss.

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ORIGINAL AND

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Colds,
Asthma.
Bronchitis.**

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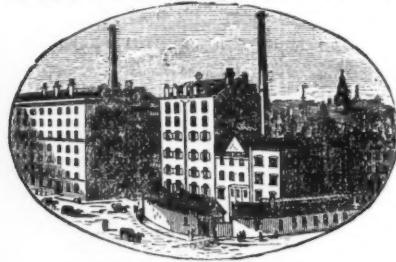
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